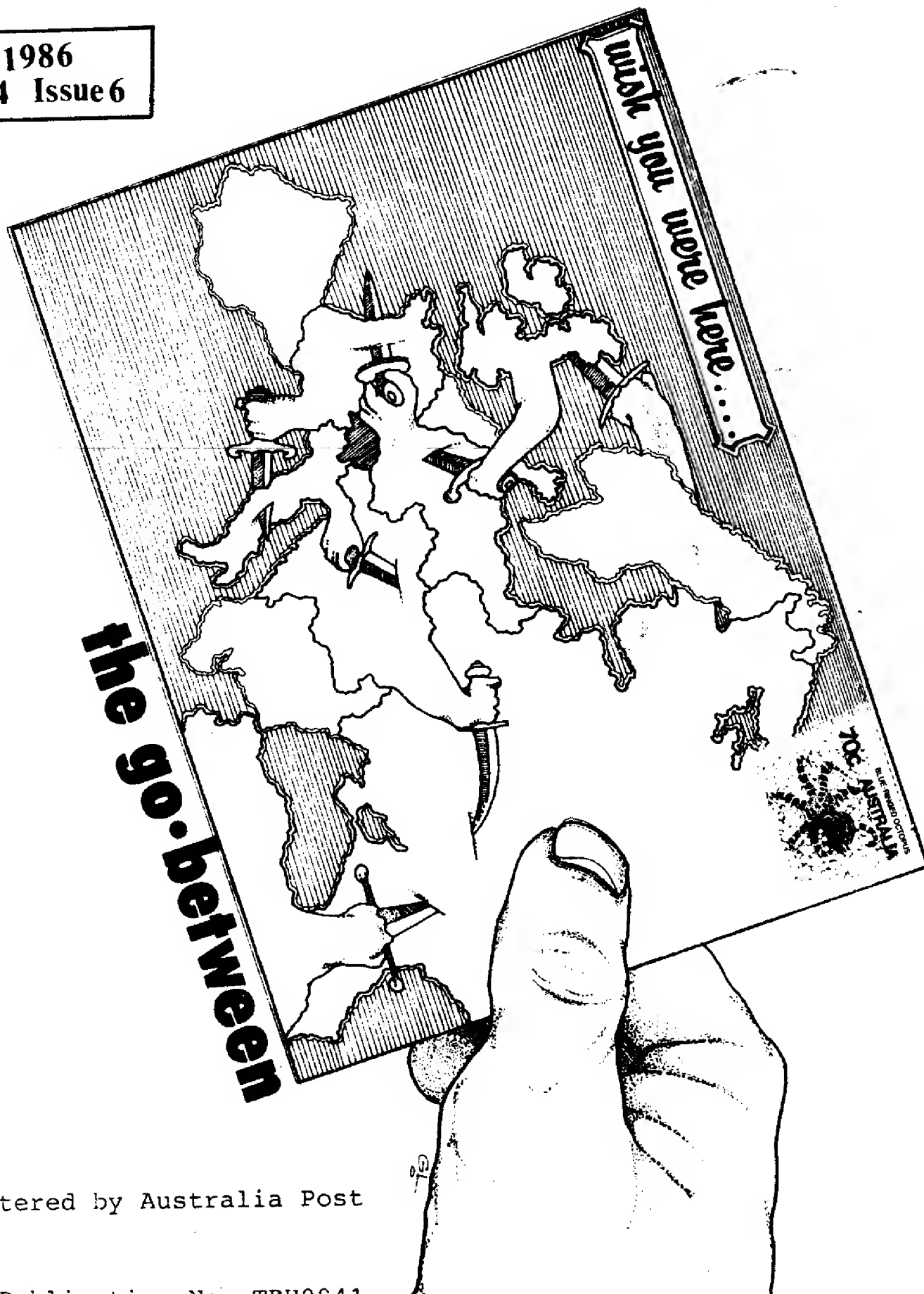


Nov 1986  
Vol 4 Issue 6



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## THE INFORMATION PAGE

## THE GOBETWEEN

Is a postal games magazine published approximately every six weeks. It's primary function is to cater for people who play games by mail. The Go Between seeks to fulfill this function by:

1. Running postal versions of boardgames like DIPLOMACY, KINGMAKER, STARFLEET BATTLES etc
2. Presenting articles, reviews, information on commercial play by mail games such as those offered by the Missing Tiger and other moderating services.
3. Providing information on the Play by Mail field in general.
4. To help bring information, people and products related to the PBM field together.

## HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

A year's subscription costs \$12 for approximately 8 issues. To subscribe make out a cheque or money order to Go Between Publications for \$12.

## HOW TO PLAY POSTAL DIPLOMACY ETC?

To enrol into one of our postal games just write to us at Go Between Publications telling us that you would like to play in a game and we will place you in the next game of your choice that is starting.

If you are interested in other games such as Postal Go, chess or other boardgames not normally played within the ambit of this magazine turn to our NOTICE BOARD for details.

## I WOULD LIKE INFORMATION ON....??

If you would like to know more about a particular game, activity or where to get things like articles, rules etc then send your request to us with a stamped self addressed envelope and another stamp (to help defray our costs) and we will try and provide you with that information or tell you where and how to get it.

We will try and give you a reply as soon as possible but this service is subject to the resource constraints of our other activities.

## I WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE

If you are starting up a new service, promoting a tested and proved product, maybe got a few hundred Dragons to offload etc then consider advertising in the Go Between. Currently our subscribers number over 150 from all over Australia and New Zealand. We have a number of special deals and can carry even the smallest ad. Just write to us for details.



# GO BETWEEN PUBLICATIONS

GPO Box 286c  
HOBART 7001  
TASMANIA

Telephone:  
(002) 233 926

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Rick and Esther Snell.

## EDITORIAL.

We are slowly getting back on line and getting TGB out on time. Yes issue 7 will be out in December (1986) and a double issue out in January 1987. We already have some articles typed and ready for Issue 7 ! As you will see by the due dates for Diplomacy, Issue 7 will not have the newest moves ;but will issue turns not received at date of going to the printers (24/11/86).

A special thanks to Ian Plumb, who once again has submitted a very good article regarding the commercial PBM scene - we did send a copy to Chameleon Games but they have not replied - maybe next time, or we may receive an independent response as in the case of Ian's MAGIC article. It is good to see heat being generated by Ian's articles. The industry can only benefit from critical, comic or serious discussion. Its good to see raves about PBM games being published but we also need to start some hard examining of our industry/hobby.

The offer of GMs has been great. We really appreciate the help given by these people. With two new games starting the offers of help have been well timed. Remember that your GM does this job out of the goodness of his heart - send him (there are, at present, no female GMs) a Christmas card to say THANKS.

Esther

## From the Underling's Desk

I would like to say that the impact Esther has had on the production of the Go Between has been tremendous. How tremendous will start to really show over the next few issues. One of them will be on time arrival of the next issue.

At the moment we aim to get the Double Issue out in mid to late January, however I would like to ask for your understanding if the arrival of the little one delays us. It is due on December 17th. And I'm told by the wise that our ability to function in the first few weeks will be severely affected.

Now an add from yours truly

COMMERCIAL BREAK.

## PANTHER (BOARD) GAMES

WARLORDS - China in Disarray, 1916-1950 - \$25

TRIAL OF STRENGTH - War on the Eastern Front 1941 - 1945 - \$40.

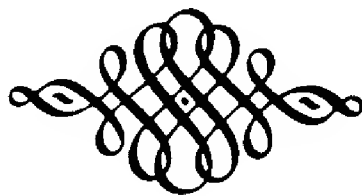
SHANGHAI TRADER - Wheeling and dealing, vice and corruption - \$37.

Availiable by writting to RICK SNELL c/- GPO BOX 286C, HOBART, 7001, TAS.

## Honour Roll:

*Our thanks to the following people  
for submitting articles;*

LINDON FLOOD  
IAN PLUMB  
WAYNE CLOSTER  
ROGER ALLEN  
PAUL YOVICH  
JAMES VICKERS  
BROOKE ALEXANDER  
MARK DEWIS  
JOHN RODDA  
MALCOIM BRUCE  
KEVIN FLYNN  
THE GMS  
PETER CAMPBELL  
JOHN CAMPBELL  
GLEN WORTHY  
CHRIS SMITH



## ON THE ROAD.....With Rick

## SUBSCRIPTION INCREASE

After two years of putting the Go Between out at a yearly price of \$12 we are increasing yearly subs to \$20. This new rate will apply from 1/1/87.

However all existing subscribers can resubscribe before 30/1/87 at a lower subscription of \$15. This special offer even applies to subscribers whose dues do not fall due until the second half of 1987. If you pay \$15 before 31/1/87 we will add twelve months to your subscription.

Over the last 2 years we have improved both the quality and quantity of the magazine while slowly introducing a number of new ideas and services. With the increase in subscription fees we will be able to continue along this path while maintaining our policy of offering a set yearly subscription to subscribers. That policy ensures that a subscriber gets a year's subscription for one set price despite any changes in postal costs or production costs.

## GM MANUAL

The draft of this guide for Go Between Gms is almost ready to be circulated to all Gms for their comments. We have had Jemima occasionally popping in to catch up with a lot of my Gunner Projects ...I'm gunna do this and I'm gunna do that.

## REPRINTING OF DIPLOMACY WORLD

One of the rare "mission accomplished" On The Road ideas, as of the 1/1/87 Go Between Publications will be reprinting the flagship of the postal diplomacy hobby in the USA, DIPLOMACY WORLD. This magazine is published quaterly and was founded in 1974 to serve the Diplomacy hobby. It attempts and succeeds in printing some of the best original material available on Diplomacy the game and how it is played. For an example of the type of article that appears WRITE TO RICK.

We will be reproducing the current issues of DIPLOMACY WORLD only a fortnight or so after it is published in the United States. So Australians and New Zealanders will no longer have to worry about the hassles of Overseas bankdrafts, currency exchange rates or having to pay extra for airmail delivery or wait for the surface mail to crawl to our shores.

The cost will be \$6 per issue or 4 issues for \$20.

As a special offer we will give a year's subscription to both the Go Between and Diplomacy World (i.e., the best of Diplomacy magazines in Australia and the United States) for \$32. New Zealanders please ask about \$NZ prices.

We will probably reprint the best articles for 1986 as a special edition. So if you want to be a few steps ahead of your opponents subscribe to DIPLOMACY WORLD.

Just a reminder that the most impressive thing about DIPLOMACY WORLD is what's in the magazine, not what's on it.

DIPLOMACY WORLD, Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102, U.S.A.

Box 286C, GPO, Hobart, 7001, Tasmania, AUSTRALIA .

## PLAY BY MAIL REFERENCE BANK

I have started building up copies of a number of articles and publications on Diplomacy plus other games played by mail. If you are interested send a stamp for a catalogue of articles etc that are available.

This is a must for anyone wanting to increase their standard of play in both Postal and Face to Face Diplomacy games.

## THE FLYING DUTCHMAN COMMERCIAL PBM MAGAZINE

Like some Will O' Wisp this idea has flirted around the scene for the last year or so. The general proposal is that instead of a number of In-House magazines being labouriously produced by hard pressed moderators that there be a single Australian PBM magazine catering for all types of PBM games. Around August of this year that idea almost became a reality. However due to Chameleon Games making new printing arrangements and Esther and I forming Go Between Publications that idea slipped into low gear (or even stalled).

I would still like to see that idea take root and grow but for a number of reasons (a few being fairly selfish) I would like to see the GO BETWEEN become that magazine. I would like to hear your views on the matter, if you can get them to us during December I will do a special forum in the January Double Issue. This is a chance for all of you to have a say.

## POINTS TO NOTE.

Apologies from GM of 86B. Tony is 20 days away from completion of his Degree, with a final project to finish.....turns may be a little late.

## STAB RATINGS

A New Compiler

Peter Clarke has kindly offered to do the STAB ratings. We gratefully accept and (as mentioned in the "The Envoy") he will receive a free subscription to the Go\*Between.

## NEXT ISSUE

No. 7 December 1986

Some articles that will be included;

1. Empire Theory in Diplomacy Revisited
2. Human Moderated PBM "An Endangered Australian Species"
3. Horror Comics by Brook Alexander
4. A review of "The Envoy" and its Sires.
5. Tactics in Final Days
6. "From My Kit Bag" a Diary of A Final Days 2 Player
7. "What All Those Diplomacy Order Abbreviations Mean"
8. A New Diplomacy Map



## LETTERS

Dear Rick and Esther,

Hello. You had better watch out Rick. Esther did such a good job on the last issue you may lose your editorship.....All the best to you and the soon to arrive kid. How soon will he/she/they (!) be able to start GMing ?

Yours, Wayne Closter.

*Ed.s note: We predict that the kid will be GMing at the turn of the century.*

To the Esteemed Editor:

I would like to address a couple of questions to the inventors of the Stab Diplomacy rating system. Despite my overall praise and approval of what I acknowledge is an excellent system, I can see two flaws - one purely technical , the other more " serious ". The first concerns the maximum points awardable. If I read the system right , the ratings can continue to 1918 , giving a player a maximum supply centre rating of  $(4 + \langle 17 \times 7 \rangle) / 18 = 6.833$  ( to 3 decimals ). This if added to the victory points of 3.25 gives a potential of 10.083 . In order to cure this hitch , you must either reduce the number of years rated or the victory points for a win ( or both ). With 3.25 as the victory points , you'd have to stop rating at 1912 ; if you reduced the VP to 3.2 , you could rate as far as 1915. See the following table;

VP	Years Rated		
3.5	6	$(4 + \langle 5 \times 7 \rangle)$	
		<hr/>	= 6.5
		6	
3.3	10	$(4 + \langle 9 \times 7 \rangle)$	
		<hr/>	= 6.7
		10	
3.25	12	$(4 + \langle 11 \times 7 \rangle)$	
		<hr/>	= 6.75
		12	
3.2	15	$(4 + \langle 14 \times 7 \rangle)$	
		<hr/>	= 6.8
		15	



Could you enlighten me as to what may be done ?

The second question is one nearer my heart - it concerns the rating of players who take over games after 1901. I can understand the difficulty involved in rating someone who has replaced another player , but could it not be done by adjusting their score in accordance with the satus of their empire when they took over ? For example , a person who took over Russia with 5 units in 1903 ( to choose a totally random sample - see 85G ) might be adjusted according to his current number of supply centres compared to : his starting number , the other players status , or a combination.

This matter is a personal one to me - I have taken over two games ( 85G and 85J ) and at least improved struggling positions - I feel ( and I'm sure others do too ) that some reward should be given. Paul Yovich ( Western Australian Whinger )

(Rick's note) Paul I will leave it to the new Stab compiler to respond to your questions but I would also like to add my weight to your point about a rating recognition for people who take on standby positions.

## LETTERS CONTINUED.

9.

Received the latest TGB today. Nice cover -- bright for a dull old Melbourne day. Inside, the usual brilliant material, the kind of stuff that nobody else could possibly publish. I have one fervent wish however -- please get a spelling checker. Typo's are irritating, genuine misspelling's embarrassing. You need a dilligent sub-editor!!

Thanks for publishing my article on MAGIC. I hope to see articles on all the PBM games, eventually, in TGB, and I hope that I can write many more of them. Enclosed with this letter please locate an article on Feudal Lords -- I hope you find it suitable for the new look TGB.

Good to see you with a 17 ranking in the NDR -- despite not playing this game, I like the ranking table, as I can recognize quite a few names. The usual (endless) Diplomacy games received a cursory examination. Having never played the game, I don't understand the order lists, so I am left to read the brief communications which sometimes appear. Other than that, not much entertainment value from the Diplomacy games....

The advertisement for Magic is interesting (and identical to the one in the latest Breakout). They don't mention the order limitations. Very politic of them. Still, it is the best game around.

I enjoyed Cameron's verbose blow-by-blow description of his RFS game. At least he writes coherently. The Final Days analysis was a bit premature, though interesting. Initially, 65 Crack Squads?! I didn't take any. A purely jeep force seemed the obvious way to go. Highly mobile, highly destructive, travelling in pairs or triples. I still believe it will work! BIMULOUS is quite correct -- we have the inferior force, and, I believe, the inferior command structure (ie method of giving orders). However, we might still win, if the aggressive players can be removed swiftly from the game (AZLAN TIGER is a goner...).

Marks comic strip is good, but taking a long time to get anywhere. I've forgotten who Lieutenant Sor is -- I'll look up the back issues, maybe.

Advertising is a bit pricey -- are player advertisement's the same price as business add's? - - - - -

IAN P.W.M.B.

### Rick's Comments

Thankyou Ian for your letter. I have turned the Apricot's spell checker on, so that should lower the error rate.

I hope that the couple of articles that appear in this issue and the next issue will start to make the Diplomacy games a little bit more interesting and entertaining for you.

Yes Dhorn is slow moving but it could be the nature of the landscape around us here in Tassie. People from small islands like to take their time. However we will try and get Mark to pump up the tempo a little.

FACE TO  
FACE.

Griffith Uni gaming  
club.  
Brisbane.  
Sunday 10am-5pm  
at Uni. All welcome  
50¢ a day \$20  
a year membership.  
role play, board games

P.S. arrange  
games at other  
times at other  
places  
Malcolm Owen  
3721434 - night  
Mon, Wed, Thur

FACE TO FACE  
Steven Bagshaw  
09-342 9552  
78 Sherington Rd  
Greenwood 6024  
Coordinator.

'NANTED.  
COPY OF  
BLITZKRIEG RULES  
(A.H). REWARD OFFER  
ENQUIRE: TIM FRIEDRICH  
6 RICHARDSON ST  
BOX HILL 5TH  
VIC 3128

WANTED - ALIVE  
PBM opponent for  
A.H.'s 'Battle of the  
Bulge'  
Contact: Dougal  
4 Ivy St  
Burwood 3125

Coordinator  
Contact:  
John Cain  
78 Barend Rd  
Bairwyn 3103  
03-8362283

WANTED PLAYERS IN SYDNEY  
FOR  
BATTLETECH  
CAR WARS  
N.A.T.O. vgames  
& PANZER COMMAND vict, game  
PAUL BRAUN 528-3778

PBM OPPONENT  
FOR 'GO & CHESS'  
(Vegie level please)  
ANYONE WITH INFO  
ON HOW TO PLAY  
PBM ADA D.  
CAVIN BEGHE  
15 BOAM BEES  
PT. MACQUARIE  
NSW 2444

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HOBART 7001 TAS AUSTR.



Diplomacy The Game.  
An Introduction to the Game  
By Rick Snell

#### HISTORY:

The development of diplomacy was began by Allan B Calhamer in 1954. After many years of research and experiment the game has since undergone little change. The first commercial version of the game appeared in 1958. Several hundred variations have been developed by keen players mostly employing different historical and/or geographical variants.

Postal Diplomacy was started by Dr John Boardman in 1963, with the publication of his magazine GRAUSTARK and postal fans are largely responsible for the proliferation of magazines devoted to the game.

Every year sales of the games continue, it's popularity probably due to the fact that it is unique among adult board games for its free negotiation between players in which (almost) nothing is barred. The game has been elected by GAMES magazine as a "Hall of Fame" game.

#### THE GAME

Diplomacy is best played by seven players. Each player represents one of the Great Powers of Europe in the early years of this century. The game board is a stylised map of Europe of this period. On this map the players play a military game of about the complexity of draughts. Although only one player can win and must defeat all the others to do so, it is to the advantage of each player to cooperate with other players from time to time throughout the game. Each player's pieces consist of some combination of fleets and armies.

The crucial part of the game (in both postal and face to face versions) is the negotiating sessions that precede each move in the game. The players negotiate, usually in pairs but also in other groupings, as they choose, changing groupings frequently during a single negotiation session. During these sessions players may say anything they like and nothing that is said is binding.

In the sessions players discuss strategies, tactics, seek support or attempt to ensure another player's non-involvement in a particular region like the North sea. In direct face to face play these negotiating sessions are usually restricted to a deadline of 15 minutes. The negotiating period in postal play varies from a day to several weeks.

Nothing quite matches the sight of seven people rushing around a house talking to each other, wheeling and dealing in a tight schedule of a 15 minute negotiating session. The player controlling England becomes reduced to nervous hysteria as the German and French player remain huddled in a corner for the whole 15 minutes poring over the map and singing "I love fish and chips".

At the end of the "Diplomacy" negotiating sessions the players then write orders for all their pieces and submit the moves to a referee. All moves are simultaneous, all the armies and fleets seem to move together, each ignorant of the orders given by the other countries. Conflicts are resolved in some order or other, but the correct resolution does not depend upon this order.

Thirty four of the spaces on the board are called supply centres. A player is allowed one piece (army or fleet) for each supply centre that is under their control. At the start, each power has three supply centres and three units (armies or fleets), except Russia, which has four. Twelve more centres are not occupied by any great power at the start. As these are occupied during play, a great power tends to control an average of about five supply centres and five units. Thereafter further expansion can only be achieved by occupying supply centres at the expense of some other power. The number of units in play cannot exceed 34. If a power establishes occupation of 18 supply centres, which is just over half, that player wins the game. The game may also be ended beforehand, with all surviving players equally in a draw. Anyone who loses all pieces and supply centres is out of the game.

Pieces move only one space at a time, armies on land only, fleets in the water or in the coastal spaces of the land. Two pieces ordered to the same space do not move. Two ordered to trade places do not move. If one is ordered to hold and another attacks it, the attacker does not move. These results follow logically from equality of force, possessor's rights, and so forth. These results are called stand-offs.

The first move is called Spring 1901; the second, Fall (Autumn) 1901; the third Spring 1902, and so forth. A player's number of pieces is adjusted to equal his number of supply centres only after Fall (Autumn) move. Once a Power occupies a centre, it belongs to that power until another power occupies it. Dodging into it in Spring and out in the Fall is, however, not occupation; a piece must be present at the conclusion of the Fall move to establish occupation. Because of this rule, surprise attacks are usually planned so as to capture their first supply centre or centres in the Fall. Play in the Spring can be a little looser, sometimes aiming primarily at taking up a forward position, and sometimes sacrificing a supply centre for position, where the player is sure he can pick the centre back up in the Fall. In the Fall campaign, the pieces tend to go all out to attack or defend supply centres.

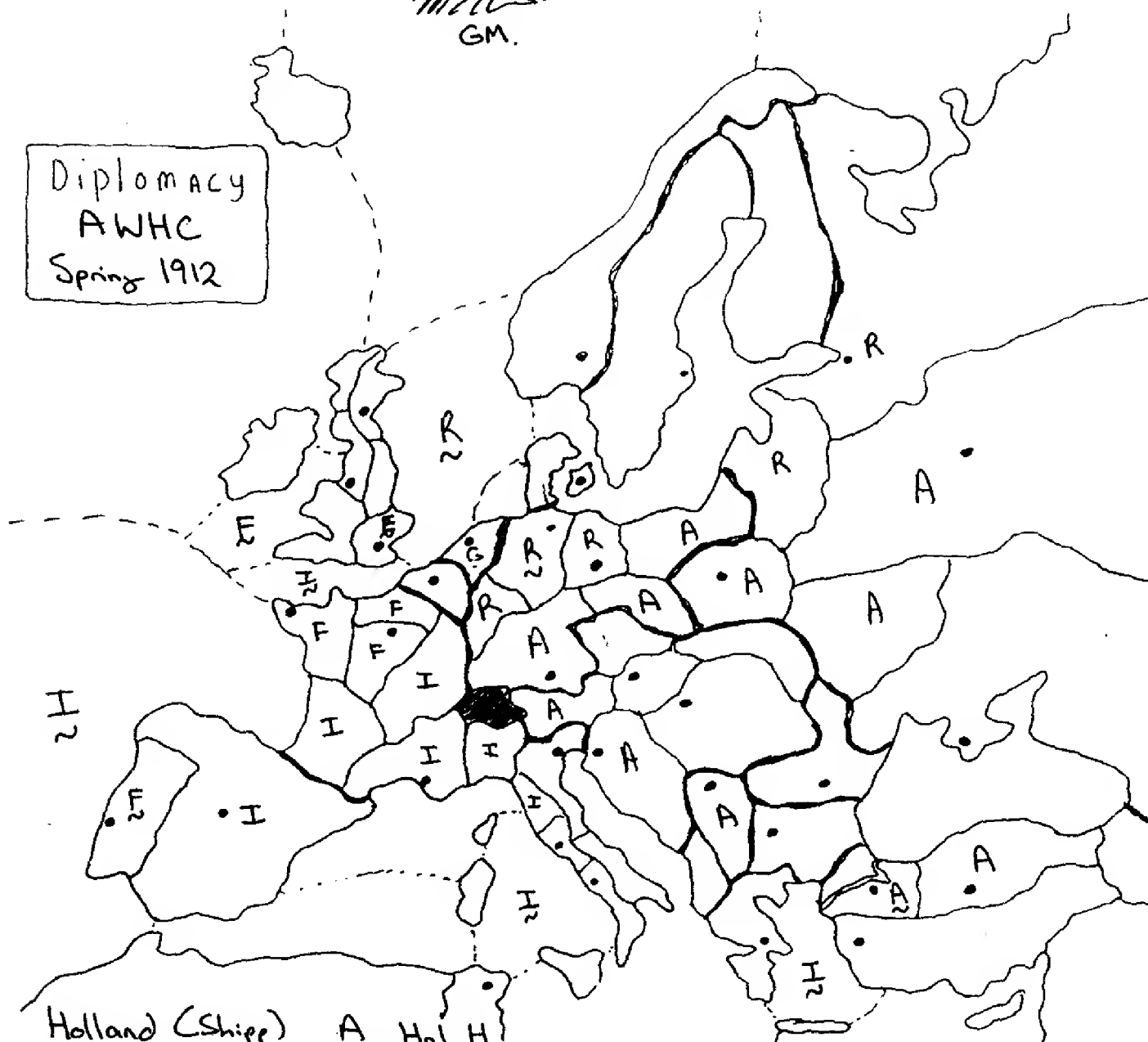
That in short are the basics of the game Diplomacy. But like all things such a basic rundown omits the real spirit and interest of the game. Yet I hope that this brief overview of the game begins to make the diplomacy games in this magazine a little more understandable and interesting to non-diplomacy playing subscribers. Such as Ian Plumb and others. For people interested in finding out more about the game refer back to the Play By Mail Reference Bank mentioned in "On The Road...".

The majority of this article was based on a longer article by Allan B. Calhamer.

Apologies for the delay. The <sup>13.</sup> next deadline is 21st of November 1986

*M.H.*  
GM.

DIPLOMACY  
AWHC  
Spring 1912



Holland (Shipp) A Hol H  
 England (Barnsley) F Wal-Lon  
 France (Thomas) A Bre-Par, A Gas-Bur (Retreat Bre), F Por-Spa (Sc)  
 A Pic S A Bre-Par, F Mid S F Por-Spa (Sc) (Retreat  
 From the French Press Office 'OK That's it, you've really got me mad now!'  
 Russia (Cox) [A Liv disband-error from Fill] F Nth Sea S English  
 F Wal-Lon, A Ruhr H, F Kie H, A Ber H, A St P H,  
 A Pin H (retreat Liv)

From the Russian Press Office (in Berlin) "New German Foreign Policy: The Kaiser  
 is a whimp. All aggression will cease immediately. The imperial  
 armed forces have one months leave. Kaiser can be  
 contacted at PO 338 Richmond 2753"

Austria (Searle) F Bla-Con, A Bud-Tri, A Mos H, A Ukr S A Mos,  
 A Sil-Pin, A War S A Sil-Pin, A Tyr-Mun, A Vie-Tyr,  
 A Boh-Sil, A Ank H, A Ser H.

Italy (Mellor) A Par-Gas, A Bur S A Par-Gas, A Mar S A Spa,  
 A Spa S A Par-Gas, F Wes-Mid, F Eng S F Wes-Mid  
 A Pie H, A Ven-Tus, F Rom-Tyr, F Smy-Aeg.

# diplomacy

84 C



SPRING 1908

Austria (Schacht): F TUS-TYN, A MUN-BUR, A GAS-S A MUN-BUR, A MAR-S A MUN-BUR,  
A BER-KIE, A SIL-MUN, A BÖH-S A SIL-MUN, A TYL-S A SIL-MUN,  
 A WAR-SIL, A VEN-PIE

England (Kibble): A FIN-STP, F BAR-S A FIN-STP, F NWY-S A FIN-STP, F BOT-S A FIN-STP,  
 F LPL-IRI, F NTH-ENG, F MID-NAT, F NAF-MID, A PAR-BRE,  
 A KIE-S A RUH-H, A RUH-S A KIE-H

France (Geissman): A POR-H

Turkey (Bornsley): F TUN-NAF, F WES-MID, F SPA<sub>(SC)</sub>-S F WES-MID, F LYO-WES,  
F ION-TUN, A MOS-UKR, A STP-MOS, A LVN-STP, A PRU-H

GM Comment

Mr Kibble claims an unbreakable, 7-unit stalemate line. Can anyone else see it?

*Duncan*

**Finally released !!!**  
The PBM Science fiction game you have been waiting for:

# MAGIC

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

The new science fiction, computer-moderated, play-by-mail  
game of space exploration, alien contact, conquest  
and adventure by Peter Mackay.

Playtested by more than 90 playtesters. Two Years in the making.

You are the ruler of a space empire. How you deploy your resources and talents is up to you. Power, riches and glory await you. Your aims are self-determined and self-monitored. Military Warlord, Merchant Prince, Pirate Lord, Master Diplomat, Information Broker, Revolutionary: it's up to you.

There are no set victory conditions, but all players are graded against each other in regards to Military Power, Economic Development and Technological advancement.

There are 95 players in each game. The game is processed fortnightly, by the computer, acting on the most recent orders for each possession. Income-producing and other activities continue fortnightly, regardless of order submission. This system enables those players who are not able to submit frequent turns to compete with those who are.

**COSTS:** \$5.00 Per Move submitted, processed and dispatched.  
\$2.50 If no turn is submitted and a response printout is generated ( includes all messages updates)  
\$1.50 If no turn is submitted and no response move is generated.

Note: Costs are not cumulative.

---

Please send me the rules, Find enclosed \$3.50  
OR

Sign me up straight away. Please find enclosed \$10 for rules setup and first move.

NAME : ..... Phone:.....

ADDRESS: ..... Post Code:.....

SEND REPLY and make monies payable to

P.B.M. Magic  
P.O. Box 484  
Lutwyche, 4030.



WHY A SWAMP? WHY NOT  
A FOREST OR PLAINS...?  
EVEN A BLOODY DESERT'D  
BE BETTER THAN ALL  
THIS LOUSY MUD!

HOW MUCH  
FURTHER?

AS NEAR AS I  
CAN DETERMINE, WE  
ARE MORE THAN  
AN HOUR'S JOURNEY  
FROM OUR DESTINATION.

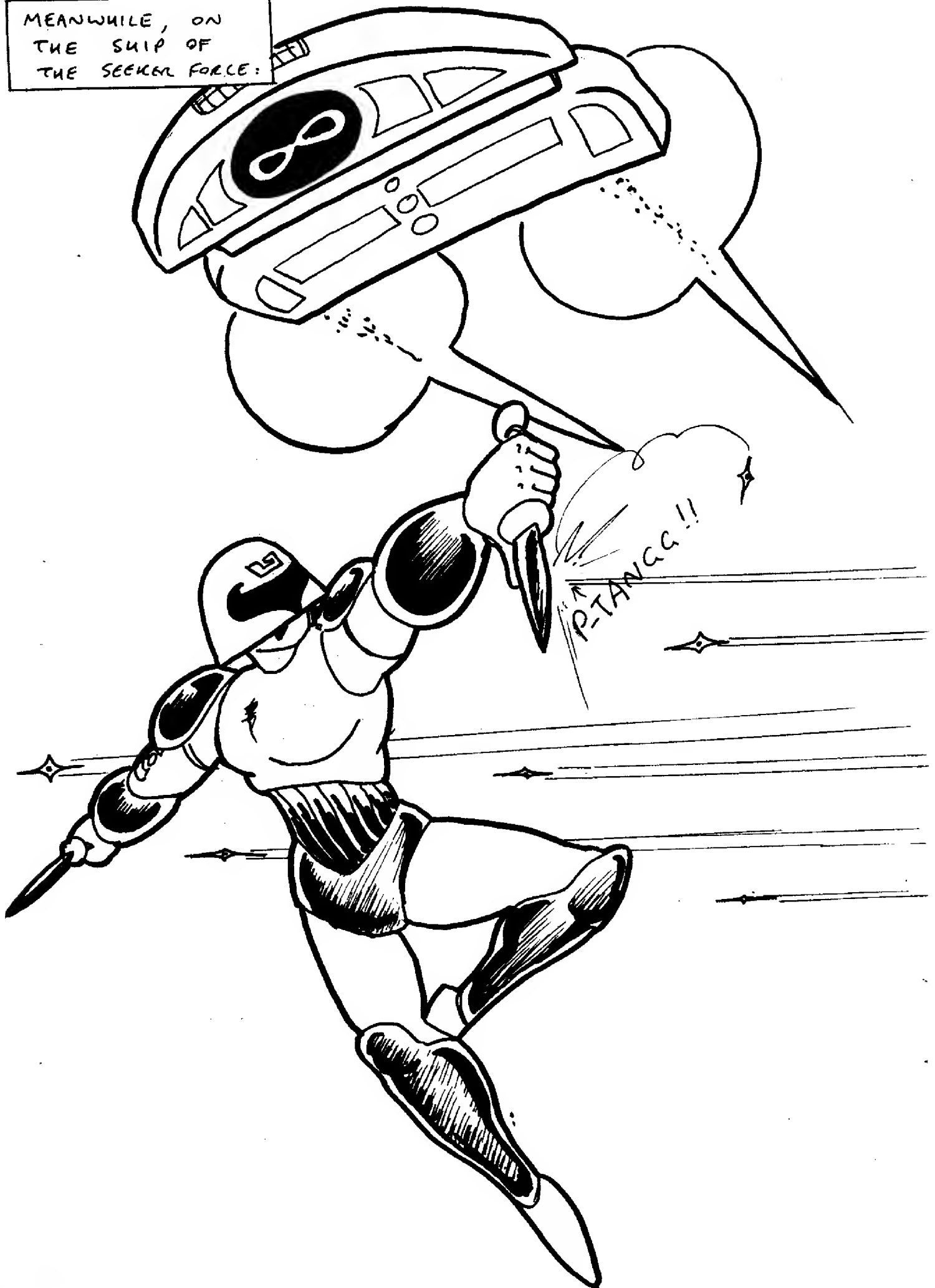
GREAT.

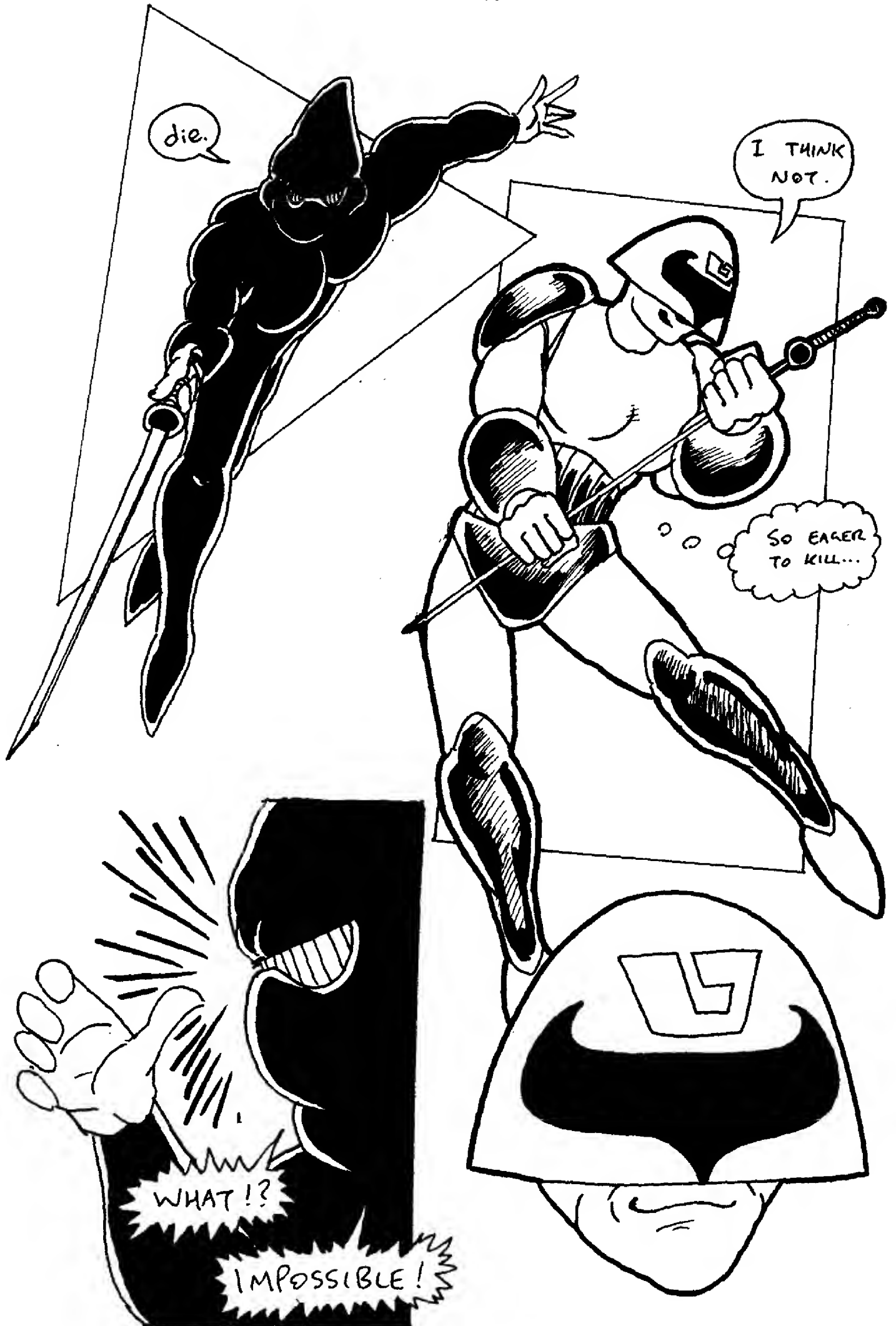
# dhorn

CHAPTER 7:

BY MARK DEWIS

MEANWHILE, ON  
THE SHIP OF  
THE SEEKER FORCE:







20.  
DEADLINE : 5 DEC 86.

# diplomacy



ENGLAND: BAGSHAW: A. London-Brest, c by F. Chan, F. Norway-NS. sup by F. Edin, F. Den-Kiel, F. SP hold.

GERMANY: MCKINLEY: A. Mun hold, A. Keil-Ber, F. Heli-Kiel, F. NS-Nor S, A. Par-Gasc, A. Bel. Mars hold.

ITALY: GOULD: F. Spa hold, F. Tur-WM, F. Ion-Aeg, F. Adri hold, A. Serb sup F. Alb-Gree, A. Tyr-Pie, A. Tri-Tyr.

RUSSIA: YOVICH: A. Mosc-SP. sup by F. Liv, A. Boh-Mun. sup by A. Sil, A. Bud sup F. Rom, F. Rum sup F. BS-Bulg (EC).

ADJUSTMENTS: EF. StP'burg retreat to Norway.

GA. Munich retreat to Ruhr.

TA. Bulgaria, TF. Greece disband.

PRESS: THE BATTLE FOR GERMANY HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.... DER FUHRER.

NEITHER THE BATTLE FOR FRANCE NOR THE BATTLE FOR RUSSIA IS OVER. Steve of England's  
new address for Paul Yovich from mid November;

TSAR

19 Denmark Way  
Warwick WA 6024.

Andrew Schock  
1.11.86

# diplomacy



Gamemaster: Eric Roche, 110 Cottenham Ave, Kingsford, 2032. (02)  
663 5233

France (M. Cherry): A Nap S F Rom, F Rom S A Nap, F TYH - GOL, F Tun - GOL (\*\* NSO), A Par - Bre, A Mun S German A Ber, A Ruh - Bel. A Mun disbands (no retreat given)

Turkey (Sultan Mellor): A Pie - Mar, F ION - ADR, A Ven - Pie, A Tyr S Russian A Boh - Mun, F Apu S F EMS - ION, F AEG S F EMS - ION, A Con - Bul, F EMS - ION, A Ank - Con

Russia (Czar Closter): F Sev stands, A Mos stands, A Pru S German A Ber, A Sil S A Boh - Mun, A Boh - Mun, A Ven - Boh, A StP - Fin, F Nwy - NTH, F Den - Kie, A Swe - Den.

Germany civ. disorder. A Ber stands.

England NMR A Bre, A Kie, A Hol, F NAO, F HEL, F NTH, F ENG all stand.

Russia: Mos, StP, Sev, War, Mun, Vie, Bud, Rum, Nwy, Swe, Den = 11 builds F StP(nc)

Turkey: Smy, Con, Ank, Bul, Ser, Gre, Tri, Mar, Ven = 9 as is.

France: Par, Bel, Tun, Spa, Por, Rom, Nap = 7 as is!

England: Lon, Lpl, Edi, Hol, Kie, Bre = 6 disbands A Kie (farthest from home rule).

Germany: Ber = 1 as is.

Press: Russia to World: Thanks to the successful Russian sortie into Berlin last turn. The English puppet has been removed and replaced by a Russian puppet. (GM:- Or, is it a French puppet?).

AROUND THE TRAPS  
A Brief Look By Rick At Commerical Play By Mail

AUSTRALIA

The Australian Wizard

Playtesting has commenced on the new version of SPIRAL ARM. I am in the playtest and currently giving Genesis II (Gerry Lillicrap) a hard time because he won't write to me. Hopefully Kevin Flynn will write an article for us about the new version for the next issue. Two other games being playtested at the moment are KINGDOM and WORLDS IN CONFLICT.

Magic

The 2nd game of Magic is filling and due to start very soon.

Chameleon Games

Have just introduced the Flying Buffalo computer moderated fantasy game HEROIC FANTASY to Australia. The game will be run from their new office in Chinatown, Sydney.

Snedco

Have decided that human moderated games are too difficult to run and have taken a break from the moderating field.

Armchair General

Seems to be unable to generate enough interest in his game Warlords of Ramos (I love the title) to continue at the moment in commercial PBM.

NEW ZEALAND

Richard Mason and Tony Charles have been doing very well with their Game of Princes (GOP).

ENGLAND

KJC Games game It's a Crime now has over 2,000 players in 3 seperate games. The game started early this year. KJC Games is also introducing the US game Imperium Challenge to the UK.

USA

A new PBM magazine (or rather an old one reborn) Gaming Universal has been published. I will attempt to find out who the local distributor is, as the American publishers will not accept subscriptions from Australia or Europe.

ILLUMINATI by Adventure Systems won the H.G. Wells Award for best Play By Mail Game of the Year at ORIGINS 86.

FEUDAL LORDS IS A GOOD GAME, BUT....

....IAN PLUMB.

Feudal Lords is an interesting game run here in Australia by Chameleon games. It has been the recipient of many detailed reviews in both Flagship and Pandora magazines, where various strategies have been discussed, and the merits of the game copiously explored.

As most readers will already know, Feudal Lords is set in England, initially in the year 800 A.D. Each of ten to fifteen players initially controls one of the 46 fiefdoms that constitutes England. With the recent death of King Arthur, each player has but one thought in mind -- to gain control of the throne.

It is not my intention here to review the game of Feudal Lords, nor to detail the latest in sure-fire strategies. Instead, I would like to offer a few suggested improvements to the game for public comment. For all those who have played, or are currently playing, a game of Feudal Lords, here's your chance to have your say about one of the "best" PBM games on the Australian market.

The first point I would like to raise concerns the Champion, or as he is often affectionately known, the Turkey. How many times have we waved good-bye to this fellow as he wanders off into the fens, only to be captured by dwarves and ransomed for 50 gold pieces?

Despite this persons lack of ability, it states in the rules that he is the heir to the fiefdom (which means he could be anything in rank from a Baron to a Prince). I would suggest that it would be highly unusual for the direct heir of a fiefdom to be permitted to go galavanting about the countryside searching for helpless peasants to beat up. He is too valuable -- what if the overlord of another fief caught him? I believe this is a poor rule that was included merely as an expedient -- when the overlord dies, somebody has to replace him -- somebody with a value between 1 and 10. It also acts as an incentive to send out your champion on adventures -- build up his score in case the current overlord dies. However, I doubt its historic accuracy.

Another point can be raised concerning the Champion. When the fief's Overlord rides out on a campaign, he leaves his own fief in the hands of Fred Flinstone. Fred knows as much about military strategy as Rick and Esther's new baby. Probably less. Fred has a leadership value of 1. This means that anybody who happens to attack your fief while you are out on campaign will get somewhere between a 20% and 80% bonus in their attack on your fief.

I find this an unlikely chain of events. Given that the



Champion is the heir-apparent, part of his training would surely involve looking after the fief while the overlord is away for a few months on campaign. His leadership rating would be much better than Fred's. Even if he should not be the heir, as I have previously suggested, he should still be the one to look after the fief while the overlord is out grabbing vassals. I would hesitate to suggest that that was indeed one of the duties of the Champion (T. H. White's "The Once and Future King", where Arthur tells Lancelot to look after Camelot while he was off bashing the heathens over in France).

This would act as a better inspiration for raising your Champion's leadership score, as there is nothing worse than losing your home fief.

The next point I would like to raise concerns the seneschal -- Barney Rubble. It is inevitable that your orders will fail to get in by the due date at the worst possible time. Some suggestions -- when food is selling at 50 g.p., and you have 10000 spare (and the seneschal NEVER sells surplus food). Or you have 100000 g.p., but only 105 peasants (I believe buying food is beyond him too. At the least you'll lose all townsmen). Missing a turn can be disastrous. I believe it should be possible to leave "standing" orders. For instance:

```
Knights + Peasants = xxxxx
If insufficient food to feed xxxxx people
  Then sell all livestock
  If insufficient food to feed xxxxx people
    Then buy (xxxxx - current food) food
    Else sell (current food - xxxxx) food
  Else sell (current food - xxxxx) food
Else sell all excess food
```

If there is more than 12000 g.p. available, then spy on ....

These sort of orders could cover a lot of situations, even involving the seneschal conducting campaigns.

Another problem with Feudal Lords concerns dropouts. It is simply amazing the number of people who drop out of the game, usually before even 10 turns have been completed. Half the players in any particular game quit voluntarily. They see their situation as "hopeless", I guess, and drop. Surely they can't all be for legitimate reasons! This makes the game quite dull for those who remain -- the five or six stalwarts who think they have a chance at the throne. PBM is about player interaction -- you miss out with Feudal Lords, unless you're quick. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to correct this sort of problem.

The final point that I would like to raise concerns the order formats. Each turn, you only get 12 orders. As if that wasn't restrictive enough, most of the orders also have limits, so that later in the game when home fiefs are relatively wealthy, you are forced to use multiples of a particular order. For

instance, orders 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, and 26 could well have their restrictions removed without affecting play balance drastically.

Well, I hope this sparks some comment from those who know the joys of ninth century living. Personally, I think Feudal Lords is good, but there is room for improvement.

## CHAMELEON GAMES

PRESENTS

### Feudal Lords

**FEUDAL LORDS.** The strategic military and diplomatic game set in a mock 'Arthurian' England. You control a fief and scheme and battle to control the empty throne of England. A game that rewards economic, diplomatic and military planning plus a bit of double dealing. Ten to 15 players. Game ends with the crowning of the King/Queen.

### StarWeb

**STARWEB.** 'PBMs original success story, the standard of excellence to which all other games aspire' — Mark Coulished, FLAGSHIP issue 9. The SF game. If you haven't played SW you haven't really PBM'd. Ten to 15 players. Ends on a set but secret turn number.

### HEROIC FANTASY

**HEROIC FANTASY.** Flying Buffalo's dungeon-delving game in which you and your party fight other players and the computer whilst searching the depths and levels of the tunnel complex. Any number of players in an endless game.

WRITE TODAY AND QUOTE THIS MAGAZINE TO RECEIVE A FREE INFORMATION KIT AND A COPY OF OUR GAMES MAGAZINE.

CHAMELEON GAMES  
G.P.O. BOX 2302, SYDNEY 2001

# diplomacy



DIPLOMACY 85-d Spring 1905

Turkey (York): NMR A SER H, A CON H, F SMY H, F AEG H, F TUN H, F ION H, F GRE H.

Italy (Whitchurch): NMR A PIE H, F TYR H, F ALB H, A TRI H (Retreats VEN).

England (Civil Disorder) A YOR H.

Russia (Wilkins): A VIE-TRI, A BUD S A VIE-TRI, A ~~XX~~ TYR S A VIE-TRI, F SWE H,  
A NOR S A SWE, F LIV-PRU, A FIN-STP, A WAR H.

France( Yovich): A BEL H, F SPA(sc)-WES, F ENG-NTH, A PAR-BUR, F LIV-CLY,  
F MAR-GUL, A LON-WAL, F BRE-MAO.

Germany (Braun): A SIL-WAR, A PRU S A SIL-WAR, A MUN S (Italian(?)) A TYR,  
F DEN-SWE, F BAL-LIV.

## Messages:

FOR SALE - Many ships, planes, tanks and other war material used by some  
success by one owner. Contact BErlin.

WANTED - 20,000 heavy warhorses, suits of plate, lances and other items  
for the rebirth of the Teutonic Empire.

To AUSTRIA - Farewell (at last) - Tzar Wilkins.

A CALL TO ARMS to all the free peoples of Europe to halt the advance of  
the Russo-Turkish Juggernaut. They have crushed the peace-loving Austrians  
and must be stopped! - President Yovich.

## Independent Response to Ian Plumbs comments on Magic. By Kevin Flynn.

Ignorance is bliss. I happen to know all the people involved in Magic and the problems they have been experiencing, in fact it was my suggestion that Andrew increase his prices to the \$5.00 mark with extra costs for long moves. So if there is anyone you want to blame it's me! There are excellent reasons for the price hike, not the least of which is that the game is worth every penny (if you like the style).

Ian's assessment of costs involved in Magic are really based on nothing at all, I would suggest he has no comprehension of what is required and is ill suited to making judgements. As I have intimate experience in this field I shall now endeavour to explain the pricing structure of Spiral Arm, then that of Magic in comparison.

Spiral Arm was \$3.50 per turn, now \$4.00. With the price rise we received not a single complaint, I like to think that everyone thought the game worth the price. Looking at this cost of \$4.00 it can be broken into two basic sections: Profit and Costs. Costs include postage - 36 cents, envelopes (printed) - 7 cents, paper 2 cent a page with an average of 5 pages - 10 cents, ribbons - 4 cents. Labour is the hardest to work out accurately, however comparing it to my previous job at around \$10.00 an hour we can work out some figures. Firstly you have to appreciate that EVERY piece of time spent on a game is money, so the following list of activities will give you an idea where it all goes, these times are per move:

Inputting - 3 to 5 minutes (up higher in game #1)

Backing up, purging, processing and printing per move - 4 minutes.

Travel to mail box - this is very difficult, we clear our box every day except Sunday, for all 13 games, with Magic they only have one game. In our case however each move needs 1 minute (that would be 13 minutes with one game!!).

A total of 8-10 minutes each, thats 60 cents. So far we have a total of \$1.17 in costs directly related to the production of a turn. If payment is made by cheque we lose 10 cents stamp duty, if by bankcard we lose 12 cents. So it would appear we are making around \$2.50 profit on each move.

Now we can get down to the real expenses, the cost to develop Spiral Arm to the stage of the first game.

Computers - \$10,000.00

Printers - \$2,000.00

Programming (35 hours a week for 30 weeks) - \$18,900.00 (using Grahams old wage of \$18.00 an hour).

Materials during development - \$1,000.00

Initial advertising - \$500.00

This total then comes to around \$32,000.00. At \$2.50 per move that means we need to process 12800 moves. We are presently around the 6000 moves mark after two years of operation. So in effect you can see we are running at a loss, the truth is somewhat different because labour costs are really your own time and don't actually cost you money (although they did mean you weren't working at the time and therefor failed to earn the money). In our first financial year we lost \$6000.00, in the next full year we made \$3000 over expenses, next year our profits will jump because we do not expect any outlays for new equipment which have been incurred previously. (Two computers - \$6,000, two printers - \$2,000).

On top of all these definable costs there are others - phones, further advertising, answering machines, petrol, rent (for the business room), free turns, attending conventions, setting up new games of SA (takes 6 hours), developing new games, playing other games to keep up with whats going on, books for reference material into new games, being woken at 11.00 pm by complaining players, connecting errors in moves, reprinting lost moves, electricity, disks, etc etc etc.

So you can see that for us at the Rust Wizard it is not a small matter, we have committed ourselves to an enterprise and have decided on a price we think the market will bare that will see us on top after three years of operating. We could easily have charged higher and believe we would be able to sustain our player numbers because SA is such a good game (modesty), we didn't because we wanted a low price to attract players to begin with.

I now come to Magic and there are several differences here. To start Peter McKay is NOT a professionally trained programmer (as Graham is). He selected DBase III as his language to write the game in where as we were able to use PASCAL. I can demonstrate the difference in this choice quite easily. It takes 3 hours to process and print SA after all inputting has been made, thats 6 hours for 100 players. Magic takes 72 hours for its 100 players, ASSUMING it all works. Magic is still under development and bugs in the program appear regularly, Peter has a job, a wife and a NEW child to look after and so cannot dedicate needed time to fixing the system, he is however getting there. PBM Magic, the company, has invested less than we did originally in hardware but have still outlayed more than \$6,000 to get the game running.

Ian suggests that inputting and mailing takes only half an hour, that \$5.00 in itself at my old wage! I would suggest that Magic in its present form takes considerably longer than half an hour per move. Ian also suggest that inputting shouldn't take too long as it comprises only 40 orders! Inputting is entirely dependent on the programming style and language, and some importantly player or GM errors. With SA in its initial stage when ever we made an error we had to sit down and write a whole new program to edit the error, let alone go through the process of connecting the error. More time wasted. Magic uses a system of orders that is slower to input than SA. I have no idea what the speed of the input is but if its as bad as the production times then each move could easily go to 10 minutes.

Now I come to some of the players in Magic. I have been privy to some of the players comments on turns costs. The one I found staggering was a player who recieved 30+ pages, inputted \$10.00 worth of orders, then had the gall to complain not only about the turn cost, but he refused to believe that the move cost any further postage. Magic uses bulk mailing which means no stamps are shown on the envelop, but anyone with half a brain can work out that 30 pages are not going to get through for 36 cents. I am constantly amazed at the ignorance of people in regard to posting letters, some people seem to think that anything they can fit into an envelop will get through. We have recieved letters here that are half an inch thick, costing nearly a dollar in excess postage charges. I would suggest that 30 pages is going to cost quite a bit, and Magic does not increase your move costs for extra postage they have to pay.

Lastly, and most importantly, **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PUT IN A TURN EVERY FORTNIGHT**. The game system will continue running your empire without a turn, making money, trading, moving etc etc. I personally find every second turn is sufficient for my needs, so thats only \$6.50 for two turns. You players who have empires \$000000 big you feel the need to put in a move every time can go

suck eggs. You want the power then you pay for it, otherwise curtail your activities to a reasonable level, and try rationalising your orders, several options presently exist to do this - TRD being an example.

There are lots of things that need fixing in Magic and fees aren't one of them. I suggest to those players affected by huge costs that they come up with suggestions for orders like the TRD order, that will reduce the need to give orders to a unit every turn. I personally think Magic is an excellent game that is a path setter in the PBM industry, I just wish Peter had used PASCAL!

If you don't like this rampage of mine, my home world is 2940, come and do something about it, I'm bored.

Finally, I don't want to appear nasty to Ian, if it seems I have I'm sorry, but I did this as soon as I had read his article while I was still inspired.

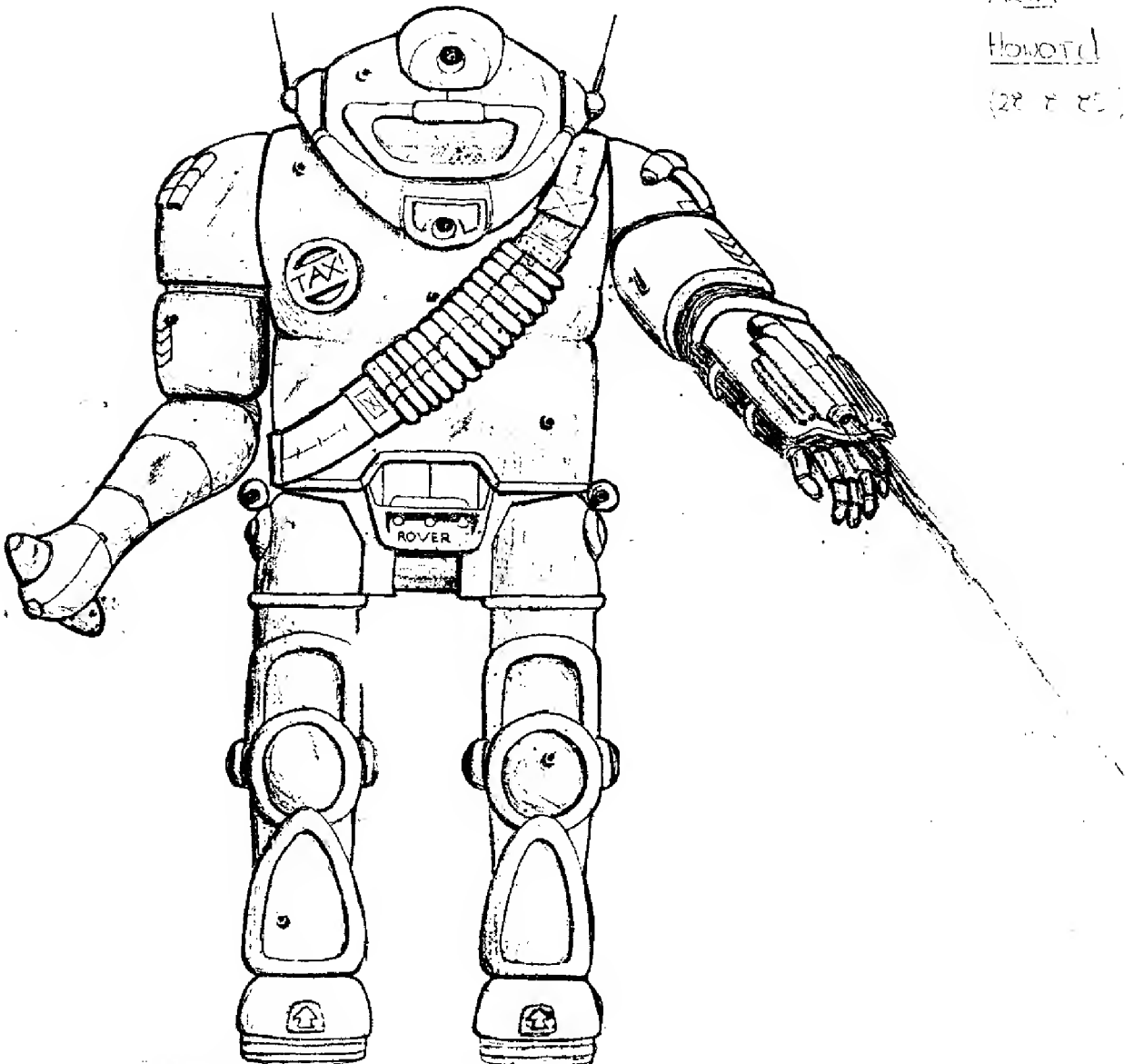
HAMMERSTEIN

- WAR 'DROID by

Alan

Howard

(28 x 25)



85-K.

# diplomacy

Wayne Closter



Spring 1905.

ENGLAND (A.Giessman) : F Mid-Por; F Eng-Mid; F Liv-Nat; F Nth-Edi;  
A Swe Hold; F Lon Hold.

TURKEY (D.Walsh) : F Bla-Arm; A Bul Hold; F Con S A Bul; F Aeg-Smy;  
F Tun-Ion.

GERMANY (B.Aveling) : A Bur S A Bel-Pic; A Bel-Pic; A Tyr-Pie;  
F Den-Bal; F Hol-Bel; A Mun S A Bur.

ITALY (M.Dewis) NMR : A Apu; A Gre; F Tyr; F Eas.

AUSTRIA (T.Friedrich) : NMR. F Tri; A Ser; F Ion; A Rum; A Gal; A Sev;  
A Mos; A War.

FRANCE (J.Ball) : NMR. That's two in a row. A Par; A Mar; A Gas;  
F Yor; A Pic retreats to Bre.

Messages: 'John! Why didn't you tell me you were going to N.M.K.?'  
From Germany. (do you mean N.M.R.?)

'It seems possible that the position of President of France could be vacant. If anyone out there in reader land wishes to apply please send your name and address to me, and if France NMRs next move I will appoint you as the new President. You can send in moves too, if you like.'

From the GM.

# diplomacy



## ✓ France (G. Northey) - New Address\*

F SPA (SCI) - MAO  
 ABUR - BEL  
 APIC - SABUR - BEL  
 A PAR - BUR  
 ASIL - BER  
 A MUN & ASIL - BER

Claims & Titles  
 Prudential Assurance Co  
 P.O. Box 4149  
 Sydney 2001.

## ✓ Italy (J. Penman)

AVEN H  
 AAPU H  
 FION - TUN

## ✓ England (R. Rhodes)

NMR  
 A STP disbanded  
 F IRI disbanded

## Russia (M.E. Haughey)

FRUM - BLA  
 A SEV - ARM (retreat UKR)  
 ALIV - STP  
 AMOS SALIV - STP  
 FNOR SALIV - STP

## Turkey (E. Roche)

AGRE - BUL ✓  
 FAEC - Con  
 A ARM & F BLA - SEV  
 F BLA - SEV

## ✓ Austria (T. Graham)

ATYR - TRI  
 ASER & FALB - GRE  
 FALB - GRE  
 ABUL - RUM

## Builds.

France: Par, Bre, Bel, Ber, Mun, Mar, Spa, Par - F Bre, F MAR  
 Russia: Stp, Mos, War, Nor, Swe - no builds possible.  
 Italy: Ven, ROM, Nap, Tun - F Nap.  
 Austria: Vie, Bud, Tri, Ser, Gre, Rum - A Vie, A Bud.  
 Turkey: Con, Ank, Smy, Bul, Ser, - F Ank  
 England: Lon, Liv, Edi, Hol, Kie.

## NIEN GM.

Steven Bagshaw ✓ 78 Sherington Rd Greenwood WA 6024.  
 MOVES To CM ON 1 Dec 1986.



## Spiral Arm Data-Base by James Vickers

## SA12 Update:

The data-base is expanding quite well so far. Thanks to Richard Mason, Chris Hellyer and Ray Trewin ( just to name a few! ). I now have a list of around 25 players ( this data is not complete in terms of real names, addresses and planets/borders etc.). Not much action has been reported. However it seems clear that a group of around 8 players in the North have got together and formed a " Northern Nexus " alliance group ( names will not be mentioned ). They even have official entry forms and everything!! Can we expect to see a Southern, Eastern or Western Nexus form in defiance ? , or perhaps us guys in core should get together ? The tactical advantages of such a large group, this early in the game are enormous - e.g. " the tough kid on the block ". Full points to the individuals who have been able to form such a group.

For future Go-Betweens I will have to know what sort of information players may want to be printed in this section (i.e. anyone needing help, contacts etc.) , plus in terms of being released to people who contact me directly ( please note - those people requiring information , who are not closely allied to me ,please find it in your hearts to send a couple of stamps to make this worthwhile i.e. I haven't got enough spondooli to keep mailing info.) Could information also be sent in about other S.A. games (please).

\* me -- <27> Wildstar :- border planets , 424,418,423,426,430,444,436,448 . I intend to be moving north through the core.

\* Can anyone help Richard Mason in S.A.8 ?? (P.O. Box 3317. Wellington. New Zealand ph 0644 859 130 ) . He's located around 513 ( aka AQUILONA ). Richard is also in S.A.11 and S.A.12.

\* Neither myself or the Missing Tiger are in the Tasmanian team in S.A.9 ( but good luck to them any way! )

\* SPIRAL ARM 13 The Missing Tigers are in this game and would like to hear from Go Between subscribers who are also in the game.

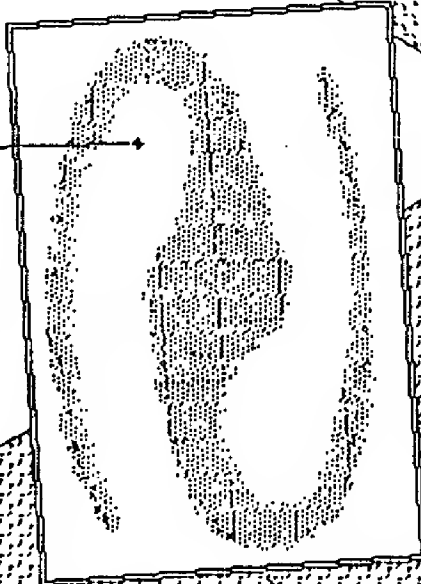
Remember this data-base is open to all Missing Tiger players and Go Between players who also play in Spiral Arm. any information you can provide on your game would be greatly appreciated. Just send it to James Vickers c/- The Go Between GPO Box 286 Hobart 7001.



# SPIRAL ARM.

A COMPUTER GAME OF GALACTIC CONQUEST.

You  
be  
here!



SPIRAL ARM  
by  
The Australian  
Wizard.

SEND  
\$4.00 for rules  
and set-up materials,  
plus three moves to  
begin the game with  
Further moves  
e \$3.50

Spiral Arm is a 50 player, computer moderated Play by Mail game of space conflict in the far future. Played on a map containing over 600 stars, each player begins with one star and a home planet. His initial fleet is small and he is required to travel to nearby stars to take possession of them for colonisation. All too soon he will be encountering other expanding players intent on controlling more and more stars. At home his people use Industry and Raw materials to build more warships and Transports for colonists. Once landed on a new world the colonists will need support and industry to help them grow to where they too can begin building ships to travel to the stars with. At the same time you will be meeting other players with whom you

can exchange information. If they are friendly enough you can even ally with them, allowing each others ships to pass freely over each others worlds, or to combine to fight a common foe. Warships include Scouts, Destroyers, Cruisers, Battleships, Dreadnoughts and Monitors. Technology may be invested in with planetary income to improve your fire power, and eventually gain unknown powers to daunt your enemies. Spiral Arm is a game of planning and diplomacy, you are almost forced to co-operate with others as you attempt to gain control of vast areas of the galaxy and achieve the final victory. Spiral Arm has two week turn arounds and each move costs \$3.50. Every move you get a report of your empire and a new submission sheet.

The Australian Wizard  
GPO Box 356.  
Brisbane, 4001.  
Phone: 07 356 2212.  
Minerva: 07:1012001.

Note: New CM: Eric (34) Roche 110 Colterham Ave Kingsford NSW 2032  
 Moves to CM on 1 Dec 1986.

# diplomacy



## ✓ France (N. Ashworth)

F MAR - SPA (S.C.)  
 F POR - MAO  
 F BRE - ENC  
 A PAR - PIC  
 A BUR S (Italian) A BOH - MUN  
 A RUH - KIE  
 F HOL S A RUH - KIE

## ✓ Italy (B. Alexander)

F TUN - ION  
 A VEN - TRI  
 A BOH - MUN  
 A TUS - VEN

## ✓ Turkey (S. Gould)

A RUM - UKR  
 A SEV S A RUM - UKR  
 A CON - RUM  
 F BLA C A CON - RUM  
 F SMY - AEG  
 F BUL (S.C.) S F SMY - AEG

## ✓ England (C. Smith)

A SWE - FIN  
 F NOR - BAR  
 F DEN - BAL  
 F NTS C A EDI - DEN  
 A EDI - DEN  
 F LON H

## ✓ Austria (S. Rudkin)

NMR.

## Press.

France: "I've developed a taste for Yorkshire pudding."

# diplomacy

86-A



Diplomacy 86-A Spring 1903.

Austria (Civil Disorder): A SER H.

England (Rudkin): NMR F LON H, F NTH H, F SKA H, A DEN H.

GERMANY (Dodds): NMR F KIE H, A HOL H, A RUH H, A MUN H.

ITALY (Watkins): NMR A VEN H, A TRI H, A VIE H, A ROM H, F ADR H, F ION H.

Turkey (Aveling): A CON-BUL, A ARM-SEV, F BLA S A ARM-SEV.

Russia (Sjollemma): A STP-ROR, A MOR-SEV, A WAR-PRU, A RUM S F BUL, A BUD-SER,  
A SIL-BER, F SEV-BLA, F NOR-SWE, F BUL(ec) S F SEV-BLA.

France(Smark): A GAS-BUR, A BEL H, A PIC H, F ENG-NTH, F BRE-ENG, F NAO-LIV.

Message:

PARIS TO BERLIN - Dodds, where are you?

I have decided to publish this turn's move despite the absence of three players. It is not fair on you who did send in your orders, and I hope that the situation will be improved by next turn.

# the Sirius Sector

The Umpire Strikes Back

A few comments from the most recent tiger.

Although I have only been a partner in The Missing Tiger for 4 months or so, I have been hanging around the office for a couple of years. Most of this time was spent programming or helping with the numerous small tasks that crop up from day to day.

Since becoming a partner I have found that my free time has been reduced to two nights a week (reserved for sport and/or socializing), and the mornings of weekends (used for house-keeping). What is more, Rick tries to make me feel guilty about having this much free time, expecting written applications in triplicate. I no longer have the time to read novels and have stopped playing indoor cricket (as has Rick).

Most of my time with TMT is now spent entering moves, stuffing envelopes or writing articles for The Go-Between. Programming time has virtually become a luxury. Having spent so much time in the office, I would like to make a couple of comments about the operation.

Have you ever noticed how many of your turns arrive in envelopes that have their opening on the end OPPOSITE the one the stamp is on? Or don't you pay attention to such trivia? My theory is that Rick hasn't yet learned that being left-handed doesn't mean that you have to do EVERYTHING in reverse. Now that we have more right-handers in the office stamping envelopes you should see a marked improvement in this area.

If you don't think that Rick's left-handedness is a problem, then let me tell you a little story. Back in the early days, when it was just Rick and John putting turns out, one of them would stuff a complete game into envelopes while the other did something else. Then, one fatal day, the envelopes were laid out on a table by one and the other got the job of putting the print-outs in them. The result was that player 1 received player 9's turn and vice versa, 2 got 8's etc. Poor old player 5, being right in the middle, was blissfully ignorant of what was happening. Needless to say there were a lot of empire maps that got traded in that game.

Even funnier, when the chain of events was uncovered John switched to Rick's method, and Rick switched to John's, almost resulting in another transposition.

As well as being different in hand preference, Rick and I have different backgrounds and this is reflected in our attitudes toward gaming. My degree is in accounting and data processing, Rick has law and political science. I work as a programmer, Rick is currently a special projects officer dabbling in freedom of information, familiarising people with computers, and acts as union rep.

The result is that I prefer set rules and simple yes/no options, Rick enjoys negotiating and role-playing. As an example, in a recent edition of TGB Rick wrote that he liked research planet turns because they gave players a chance to ham it up in an otherwise number-crunching game. My attitude is that research turns are a pain because of all the extra work they involve, part of which is in trying

to figure out what the hell Emperor Fred is trying to say in his six pages of communiques to scientists, and then deciding if it is a fair request.

So, if you want to debate the finer points of a game, it is best for you to talk to Rick, he seems to enjoy the challenge. The only answers you are likely to get from me are; "YES", "NO", "MAYBE", "HMMM", and if I'm in a bad mood (Esther; "Rick, Floody's in one of his moods again!") I might recommend that you drop out of the game if you don't like it. I still remember the last Canberra Convention where a helpful gamer patiently explained to me that there are two types of forest affecting battles in different ways, and that it was inaccurate for me to only have one type of forest in Final Days.

The only other item I wanted to cover in this article was the subject of errors in turns. Yes, we do make them. Most players are courteous when pointing them out and I would like to thank them for their consideration. Some, however, do get a little abusive if we type a move in wrong. Consider then, that on many occasions players make errors when writing out moves, and if we notice we try to correct them. I have lost count of the number of times I have entered an incorrect jump order and instead of saying "Tough, it's his fault" (which I could justifiably do), I have hunted down the missing connections and corrected the move.

From this article you might get the impression that I do not like a) Rick, and b) gamers. Neither is true. I have a great deal of respect for Rick's abilities, anyone that can get through uni with spelling and grammar like his must have something going for him. I also enjoy helping other people have a good time, whether it involves cleaning up after a party or running PBM games. I hope to get a great deal of satisfaction from running games for you in future, all I ask is that you make it as painless for us as possible.

Lindon Flood



On a narrow points victory while NIHON just fails to capture earth

PLAYER	SCORES	SHIPS	PLANETS	INDUSTRY
1. DHORN	31965	7	25	81
2. JANDAR	22159	11	29	91
3. GERMANIA	1146	1	1	69
4. NIHON	30348	14	38	89
5. D. LEAGUE	24551	11	21	73
6. MASTER	18420	7	16	75
7. ODIN	20416	10	14	88
8. PHAEDRON	20867	15	32	95
9. ANTARES	16070	10	22	68

*GAME 29 HAS BEEN WON BY JELDAR*

JELDAR WON ON A CONCLUSIVE POINTS VICTORY AND HE CAPTURED 55 WORLDS

PLAYER	SCORES	SHIPS	PLANETS	INDUSTRY
1. ROAMER	22839	16	20	82
2. DAGROD	17650	6	18	91
3. MORGAIN	19103	5	21	78
4. CEREBOR	17777	5	19	76
5. LUCIFER	26951	9	29	74
6. CORIOLAN	16184	14	11	84
7. BLIZARTH	22773	7	27	73
8. FREY	15645	13	17	74
9. JELDAR	31875	10	55	80

*GAME 31 HAS BEEN WON BY DAMUS*

PLAYER	SCORES	SHIPS	PLANETS	INDUSTRY
1. DAMUS	32231	9	43	114
2. TOPANZ	23442	7	25	74
3. JAGGED	16510	7	15	67
4. IOHWAN	23118	7	9	63
5. PHOENIX	24376	12	35	100
6. TRYUS	14231	7	21	88
7. ROYAUME	30689	10	32	85
8. FTHROG	22576	7	17	85
9. HARKAMAN	20327	10	27	79

# FINAL DAYS

Eighteen rebel groups in disarray face the organised might of computer controlled forces. You start this play by mail game as the commander of a small rebel force. Somewhere nearby are other similar groups, each too small to be a threat to the robot army alone.

In the game you face the dilemma of organising the defeat of a powerful and deadly enemy whilst avoiding the treachery of your allies'.

**NO OTHER GAME** encourages so much cooperation between players.

**NO OTHER GAME** ties your fortunes so closely to everyone else.

The goal is the same for each player.

Everyone needs help to get there,

**BUT** only one rebel leader can claim victory!

## FINAL DAYS FEATURES:

- A strategic and tactical warfare game completely computer moderated.
- A common foe, the robot forces are controlled by a real computer.
- 18 players per game.
- Graphical representation of terrain presented as hexagonal grid.
- Selection of 20 easy to write orders, including strafing, ambushing and mine laying.
- Regular voting for best leader.
- Clear and concise rulebook.
- The Missing Tiger guarantees that turn fees will not increase during the game.

For free information on this play-by-mail game, put your name and address on the back of an envelope, enclose a stamp and post it to;

**The Missing Tiger  
GPO Box 286C  
Hobart, TASMANIA  
AUSTRALIA, 7001**



## "A STORY OF RES GAME 12"

### THE HISTORY OF ELARCO

As most of you will know, we beings that go under the name of Elarco, being Calebans, Elar'c'chin, Owlfolk and Humans are a peaceful people, hence in year one we decided that we would go about exploring the Galaxy, bringing peace and prosperity to the sentient races within her.

We also decided that the best way to spread our ethos would be to communicate it to other people and open up peaceful alliances. This we did and after only 3 years had signed a 4-way alliance with Cobra, Delv, and Panther and were on peaceful terms with everyone else.

By turn 4 we had 12 planets and 1 Research Planet, and landed on the C-Ring R.P midway between ourselves and Noname5. Following our peaceful policy we decided not to start trouble over the Research Planet, and even offered an alliance to Noname5, but unfortunately we found he was a xenophobe, and remained that way throughout the game - this led to his poor scoring, and got rid of any hope he had of winning the game.

Although we knew the way to Earth by turn 4 we decided that Earth could take care of itself and we would try for the undiscovered planets. Little did we know that if we had of gone to Earth then we could have stopped a war later.

We lost our only Research Planet in turn 5 to Mongoose, but once again decided not to fight over it and instead set up a swap with Mongoose every 4 turns, giving Mongoose the first use of the Research Planet.

This turned out to be a wise move - by turn 8 we had the other 2 Research Planets out to our D-Ring, 16 other planets, 8 ships and had no worries with war. However, it was about this time when we realized what a massive amount of ore Mongoose was buying on Earth, especially the Types 2 and 3 battleore. We inquired of this to Mongoose, and he replied that he was just going to try for an economic victory by reselling it to Earth. This was actually a lie - he was building two massive battleships with it. However, our economic and statistics department backed up Mongoose's claim - ironically, if he had indeed of kept the ore until about turn 14 then he would have had a 10 000 credit lead that would have been impossible to catch up with, and he could have won the game by turn 19.

I alerted my allies of the possible economic victory by Mongoose and received enough response that our statistics department reported that with our allies help we had a 40% chance of stopping Mongoose if he did indeed try to win this way.

On turn 9 I lost a planet to Skipper and so promptly scanned his home planet - our cartography and statistics planet had been growing steadily more accurate and useful - the prediction of the position of his home planet was based entirely on probability. With the bargaining power thus gained I manage to 'persuade' Skipper to helping me and gained some valuable information off him, pushing my knowledge of planet positions to over 100. Mackenzie and Mongoose were also very helpful, as we traded maps.

There was also some trouble in the Council Of Peaceful Sentients, or C.O.P.S, in which I was the secretary, and Cobra the (silent) President. At the time Panther had been attacking planets for no good reason, including planets colonized by ourselves, and NoName5. There was a vote put forward to oust Panther from the Council, but a majority of 5 votes was needed for this, and only 4 were ever received - all against Panther. After the compulsory 4 turns Panther was reinstated and promptly moved to have NoName5 removed - it seems that even though Panther had paid for the damages to the planets and made up for his mistake, NoName5's xenophobic

behaviour had once again got the better of him and he was systematically setting about to destroy Panther - in one turn Panther had 3 Ships blown apart, and lost 3 planets in another turn - 2 of which were B-Rings. Once again the expulsion of a member was put to the vote, and once again not enough people answered to have NoName5 removed - the final vote was 4 for and 2 against the expulsion.

By turn 15 we had 10 ships, 29 planets, and knew the position of 160 more. We also found out the truth about where Mongoose's type 2 and 3 ore had gone - there was 2 battleships on Earth - 1 a Dreadnought. I communicated to Mongoose my feelings about his attack on Earth on turn 16 - by then there was no defence on Earth, and Mongoose's Dreadnought was still a large battleship. Mongoose informed me that he had uncovered a secret plot by D.Lange and possible Skipper - it appears that they had taken all of the terran people hostage (it appears that Earth is nearly fully automated, there being only 50 000 people left on this once over-populated planet. That is why the actions of the Space Patrol are so strange sometimes - they are manned by computers, not sentient beings.), and was preparing to destroy the beautiful planet with his ship, the 'Frank Exchange'. I agreed with Mongoose that this would have to be stopped, and so in exchange for the promise to help build up his Empire should I succeed in controlling Earth and disposing of D.Lange gifted me the two battleships. Alas, had he have done it but a year sooner I would already have controlled Earth and stopped the bloody war that followed.

Unfortunately, it also seemed that Mongoose probably suffered attacks from the Space Patrol, which was once owned by the very people he was trying to free - as even after he gifted the ships to me, I did not have one incident with the Space Patrol during the entire game - perhaps their computers realized after all that I was just trying to free the Terrans. Meanwhile, I was still expanding and owned 39 planets and 13 planets on turn 18.

I immediately put the battleships to good use and destroyed the Frank Exchange, stopping it from harming Earth. Unfortunately D.Lange took his Super Battle the Force De Frappe to Earth on the next turn, once again threatening to harm Earth.

This was promptly destroyed by the Liberator, one of the ships given to us by Mongoose, but unfortunately in return so was the Liberator, along with 50 good beings of our people and 50 from Mongoose, going down friends to the last.

On turn 18 D.Lange brought another fighter to Earth, this time a medium ship, the Measured Reprisal, along with a Large cargo, the Cordial Dialogue. It seemed that if he couldn't destroy Earth he would try to get as much money as he could out of it, selling to the automatic trading machines there. Panther also tried this, taking a medium ship to Earth and trading. This, and previous trading, gave him a 3000 credit lead over D.Lange and then myself, so we spoke with our people and decided that we also would take some ore to Earth, to sell so as we could compensate the families broken by war and to pay to repair ships and planets when the war was finished. We were also still expanding - on turn 20 we had 48 planets. I also received some help from Cobra who took a few ships to Earth, although they were cargo ships, to make sure Earth would not fall into D.Lange's grips if I was to fall.

However, it seemed that D.Lange and Panther were in trouble - Panther missed a turn which could have won him the game - it seemed there was an insurgence of people on his home planet that were not content with him hoarding all of the money from ore sales, rather than sharing it like we did on our planets.

D.Lange was in trouble as our cartography and statistics department had successfully predicted the position of 1 of the 3 planets D.Lange had taken the hostages to, and in a brilliant attack of daring from below we had managed to free all of the hostages with no loss of life. From the prisoners we found the location of the remaining two planets, and promptly took them back as well, freeing all of the terrans to go back to their home planet. These two planets actually surrendered without a shot being fired - it seemed the guards had finally worked out what kind of being D.Lange really was, and had decided to join our people instead.

On turn 21 the game ended with our people being in possession of 14 ships, 53 planets, the position of over 91% of the planets in the galaxy, including one that had no links whatsoever, and 30 177 credits, with D.Lange on 30 162 credits - a 15 credit victory, showing that peace and co-operation will always triumph over warmongering tyrants.

So we, the people of Beau Ideal and all allied sentient beings in the galaxy, bid you a fond adieu, and hope that peace will prosper forevermore throughout our Galaxy!

#### A PARTING SALVO FROM ROAMER.

A Report on Game 29 ---M.Bruce

Although I took over Roamer as a standby about Mid-way through the game it is one of the most entertaining games of RFS I have played in. The game had heaps of diplomacy throughout, a lot of long running wars and apparently some well executed backstabs. Now for my major gripe; the game went to that fat merchant Jeldar, and while I think he timed his run to perfection, I find it annoying that one cannot prevent an even slightly competent player from gaining economic victory through trade with Earth. I personally would find this a particularly hollow form of victory. As an aside, I'm not saying all this just because my 2 super cargos arrived a turn too late; they only went there to purchase cheap ores anyway.

While I think trading on earth serves a useful purpose, its impact on the result should be reduced. Apart from lowering the selling price of ore (not buying) the logical way of deterring fat merchants is changing the sequence orders are processed in. That is, battle should precede trading which adds a considerable element of risk to a trading run. The rule preventing battle on earth before turn 15 would also have to be changed, say to turn 10.

You may well say why don't you go play No Credit limit victory games, well I am but I'm not sure I'll be around to see the end of one. Now back to game 29; if you ever run across Dagrod in any game you're in don't, I repeat don't, take one of his research planets. He is not a man to forgive and forget. Thanks for all the ships Dagrod, you almost made it at the end. Cerebor you'll get yours you backstabbing bastard and so will you Jeldar, fat merchant swine.

ROAMER STILL RULES OKAY.

# RFS SCORING

## By Glen Northey

I have fooled around with a scoring system for R.F.S. It emphasizes all round performance and potential rather than credits accumulated. It includes a factor which reduces your score the longer you take (obviously to capture Earth in 20 turns is better than taking 30 turns).

The formula for Victory Points ;

$$VP = 2 \times V + S + (C/20) + 200R + \text{bonuses}$$

V = Velocity , which is the total of all planet values plus  
the Research Planet bonus ( Does not include trade )

S = Ship Points , which is equal to the total industry needed  
to build the ships owned by a player ( e.g. a 40F 4C =124  
points < 40 + 80 + 4 > )

C = Credits accumulated

R = Number of Research Planets ( this is effectively a 200 point  
bonus per R.P. )

Bonuses = 2500 for capturing Earth , 1000 for winning.

$$\text{SCORE} = \frac{VP}{\text{Turn no.} + 10}$$

This should be fairly easy to programme into the Game and will give a fairer relation between player positions at any stage of the Game.

## DESIGNER'S REPLY

### John Campbell

This seems to me to be an excellent system for scoring, especially the last equation. The C/20 has the effect of reducing the influence that trading presently has on the game. I would favour the removal or reduction of the 200R factor because the research ability of research planets is already a valuable addition to score.

The major alteration I favour is to change the 2V and the S factors from "current total factors" to "marginal factors". So S would become the difference between your ship points this turn and your ship points last turn. While you are building ships, S would be small and positive, but if you lose one, S will go negative. The same will happen with V. This would have an important effect: it would then be possible to actually reduce another player's current victory points by attacking him or her. C will always be positive, so the current VP will generally increase.

S and V will now be much smaller numbers than they are in the original equation, so they should be multiplied by relatively large factors to compensate. By dividing C by turn number rather than 20, the player who expands early gains more than the slow expander. Also, the first player to get to Earth gains more there too.

$$vp_{\text{this turn}} = vp_{\text{last turn}} + (20 \times V) + (10 \times S) + (C/\text{turn number}) + \text{bonuses}$$

where V and S are as modified in the text above.

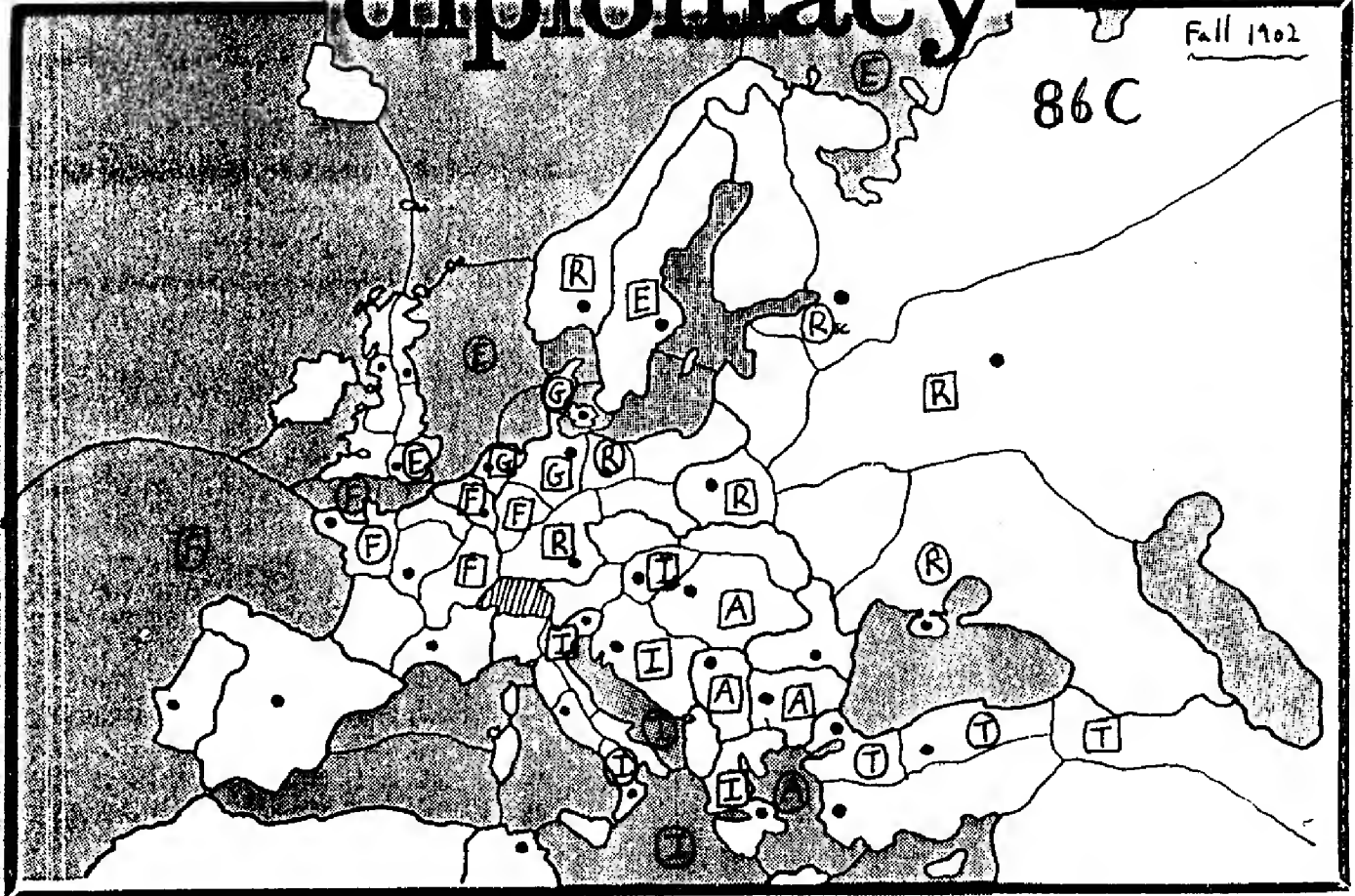
The player ROAMER has pushed for a scoring method allowing for the reduction of another player's score by direct attack. This makes it possible for non-trading players to slow or reverse a trader's point accural.

Players comments on this are eagerly sought.

# diplomacy

Fall 1902

86C



ENGLAND:(Collister): NMR.

FRANCE:(Wessels): F Bre-Eng, F MAO S F Bre-Eng, A Gas-Bur, A Bel-Hol,  
A Ruh S A Sil-Mun.

GERMANY (Gould): F Den S A Kie, A Hol-H, A Kie S A Hol, A Mun S A Kiel.

ITALY (McKinley): F Apu-Adr, A Tyr-Vie, A Tri-H, A Alb-Gre, F Ion S A  
Alb-Gre.

AUSTRIA (Crowe): F Gre-H, A Rum-Ser, A Bul S A Rum-Ser. (F Gre ret Aeg).

RUSSIA (Cain): A StP-Nor, A Mos S F Sev, F Sev-H, F Ber-Kie, A Sil-Mun

TURKEY (Civil Disorder): NMR.

Builds: England (4) no change. France (6) F Bre. Germany (3) A Mun disband.  
Italy (7) A Ven, F Nap. Austria (4) A Bud. Russia (7) F StP(sc),  
A War. Turkey (3) no change.

Press: Rome "News flash....Kaiser Franz-Joseph was today found guilty of  
war crimes by an Italian Peoples Court and executed by chain-  
saw."

New Russian player is John Cain, 76 Banool Rd, Balwyn, Vic, 3103. Ph (03)  
836 2285. Thanks to Murray Grellis for sending in orders for Russia as well.  
It was allocated on a first in first served basis. However, Turkey is now  
open, so a replacement is required. If Murray Grellis would like Turkey then  
he will have first option on it. His address: 13 Cook Tce, Mona Vale, NSW,  
2103.

Andrew England.

# diplomacy

Spring 1902.

AUSTRIA (Petersen) : F Gre-Bul (sc)

A Bud H

A Tri S A Bud

A Gre retreats to Alb.

ENGLAND : NMR

ITALY : NMR

FRANCE (Winder) : A Par-Pic

A Por-Spa

A Bel-Wal

F Eng C A Bel-Wal

F Bre-Mid

GERMANY (Schacht) : A Kie-Mun

A Den-Yor

F NS C A Den-Yor

A Ruh-Holl

RUSSIA (Yovich) : A Sev S TURKISH A Bul-Rum

A Vie S A Gal-Bud

A Gal-BudA War-Gal

F Swe S F St.P(nc)-Nwy

F St.P(nc)-Nwy

F Rum S TURKISH A Con-Bul

TURKEY (Gibson) :

A Bul S A Con-Gre

F Aeg C A Con-Gre

A Con-Gre

F Smy-Eas

PRESS (Turkey) : "Okay, lets cut the mustard and kill the infidel..."

\*to Russ : "Let's go Shopping."

\*to France : "Meet you in Venice in Fall 1906"

(France) : "The French would appreciate knowing who is still in this game." GM : So would I.

*Bill May Kimley*

## GAME 28 and that RFS MAP

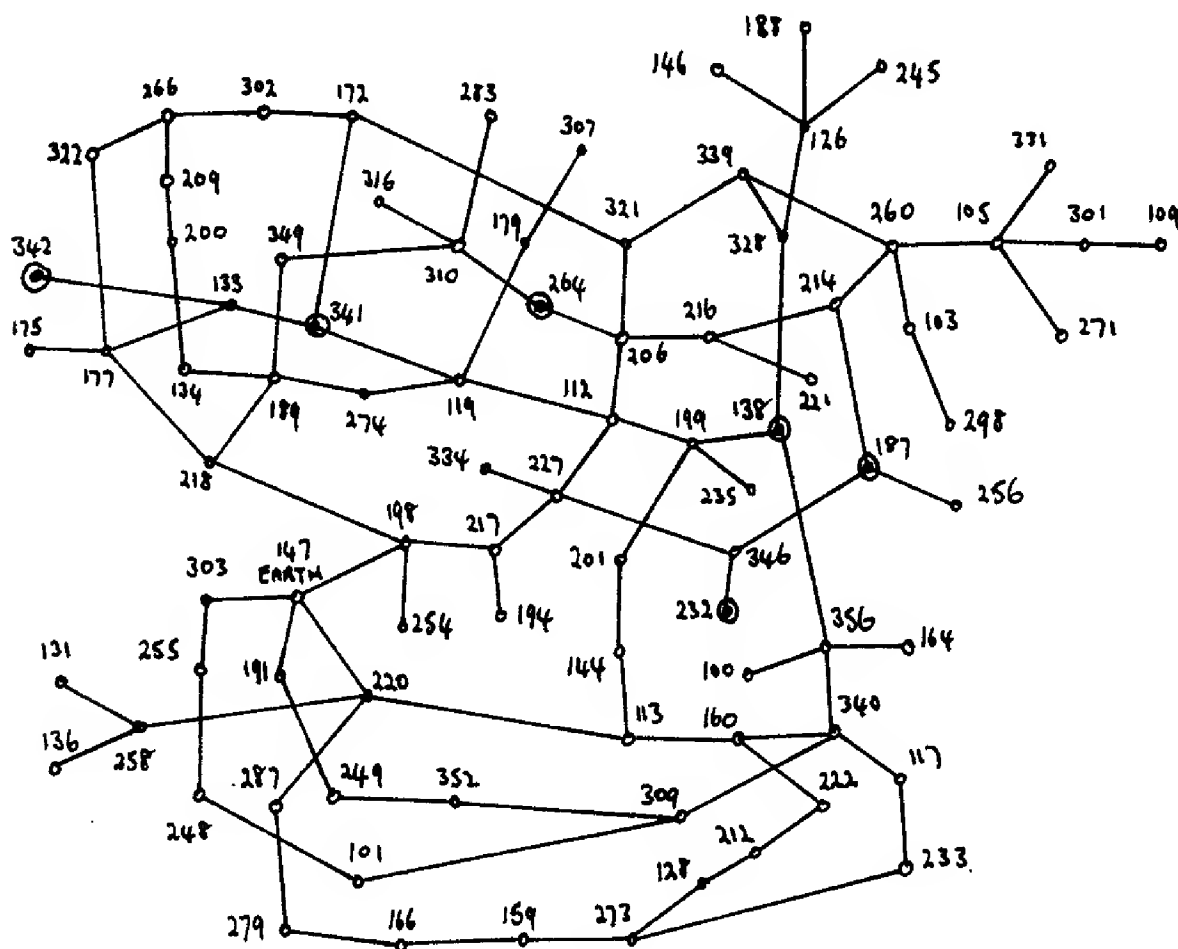
By Alan Howard

In the latest issue of The Go\*Between, there is an interesting article by Kevin Flynn on RFS maps that inspired me to tell you what I've done about it.

Kevin's pattern of planets is alright until you get to the D-ring planets. From there it gets confusing, with D-rings in one sector corresponding with D-rings in another sector on the opposite side of your Empire.

I guess it's obvious from the start that you guys use a 3D map for the whole galaxy, so when one player's map has the map of another player included on his own, then a 3D map is the only way it can be done properly (if you can call it a 3D map on a 2D piece of paper!)...well, that is what I've done anyway! See the map below.

Apart from all the mistakes I made in game 28, it was well worth playing. I couldn't really make up my mind whether I wanted to trade or go to war. It finally ended with me doing neither, just wandering around the galaxy not doing anything! I plan to rectify that in game 43. I'm going to get right into the role-playing of it. I've already created a logo for my Empire. (Actually PERIN gave me the idea of a logo.)



MAP OF RETURN FROM SIRIUS GAME 28

⊙ = Research Planet

41

Return From Sirius News  
Or what the moderator may have seen

GAME 34 no Credit Victory

RYDERE and CROMWELL involved in a nasty battle over a research planet.  
The game so far has at least one 200+ Fighter Unit ship and a dreadnought with 400+ fighter units aboard.  
IRGUN and CHAOS about to do a battle.  
ARONIA and OLD GAUR still slugging it out, this time on ARONIA's B-ring, you would think that a Queenslander would know better.  
Ship 180 has been the latest ship produced.

GAME 39

Why is GABRIAL leaking info on STARMAN's planets?  
MELDAN and BIMULOUS fighting over a research planet  
ZEUS and FREEMAN also involved in Research squabbles?  
Who scanned 331?  
MELDAN's homeworld scanned? Who was the fiend.

GAME 41.

Game 41 has now reached the halfway point, turn 11 with RENNIE broadcasting cryptic messages across the ether. Player 5, an early leader, has slackened the pace but now player 7 seems the major contender, not player 4, the present leader. Earth is very quiet but the spaceways are less peaceful as King Sol blazes away at anything worth shooting at. There also seems to be a lot of lawyers in this game. (notes from BLITZ)

GAME 42

RENALDO has been taken over by a new standby. Does he know all that has gone on before or is he a fresher?





GAME 43 a no Credit Victory Game

46.

JOBJELK is building a battleship on Earth.

BLAZSTAR's homeworld has been scanned, it's not 309.

A shock on its way for Caesar. Research planet turns can do strange things to little old cargo ships.

19 research Planets are owned in this game so where are the rest, Sin Palaces for the Space Patrol?

GAME 44

the Spon arrives on Earth.

GAME 45

BATMAN and COSMIC! on Earth at Turn 9.

BATMAN on ARIADNE's Research planet "Shuttle"

ROBIN and XANTHOS in conflict?

COSMIC! and KESSLER mutual talks or war crys?

Why is WILDSTAR hiding his light?

GAME 46 The Fast Lane Game

the kiwi player still keeping up but his ISD bill must be 1/2 the national debt.

GAME 47 A No Credit Victory Game

HUNTER off to a slow start.

SHOGUN mets OLGAN, but does he know the Timewarp?

DIPLOMAT is the first player to ever leave his address or phone number as planet names.

STARMAN and OLGAN circling above a neutral research planet.

GAME 48

SKYFERN on Earth

Why does ARACHNOS use acronyms for planet names?

MCKENZIE runs into G.Khan and ARACHOS.

Who is that BLUES BRO? Does anyone know a Kiwi who used to watch videos with a Tiger?

GAME 42

ASH... NEWS FLASH... NEWS FLASH... NEWS F

In a shock move today the Valdiss Interstellar Space Corporation branched in to the restaurant business upon finding CRAB on one of their planets. The research planet in question was almost immediately turned into a Seafood Restaurant and at last report CRAB had been joined on the menu by Lobster Thermidore and Crabes à la Toulonnaise.

OP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... S

It appears CRAB has been removed from the menu at RENALDO's Seafood Restaurant after being eaten by the Lobster.

G'day Rick,

received the rote LETTER concerning the demise of WitchKing. What a downer. You guys seem to have a lousy record with fantasy genre FBM -- your games are great, giving the players high hopes, but unprofitable to run. Still, not your fault -- games are always good on the drawing board, eh?

When I first saw WitchKing, I thought it looked overly complex. From a programming viewpoint, it even looked tricky. I could see the need for the first 14 spells, and could imagine ways of programming those effects. But spells of the informational type -- spells 15 to 19 -- were not only hard to utilise from a players standpoint, but looked very hard to program. Detecting bugs would be hard, given that the game events are not static -- how would you know for sure whether the information presented was correct or not?

Exactly what made the game unworkable? - - - - - IAN PLUMB

A number of things made Witchking unworkable. The first ones are mentioned in your second paragraph. The next thing was hardware limitations. I am loath to take the road MAGIC has and invest heavily in gadgets,gadgets and widgets to soup up the machines to run a game in. Not that that approach is wrong or bad. Rather I lack the knowledge and money to play in that league. The third thing was that the game was programmed in C by a person outside of the Missing Tiger and we made the mistake of buying the game rather than offering royalties. Therefore the programmer had next to no incentives to modify the game to improve it's moderation and we had no-one around who was versitile enough in C to rework a complex program.

The question of hand moderated games was raised by Kevin Flynn in the November 86 issue of the Wizard's Grimoire and if time permits I will be discussing that topic later in this issue, if not definitely in Issue 7.

Rick.

## The Final Analysis

Since its initial conception as a couple of robot units slugging it out on a Commodore 64, Final Days has undergone many changes. Suggestions made by playtesters were adopted as long as they were obvious improvements to the game system and were easy to program. Now that there are two games up and running, few changes are being made to the mechanics of the game, although significant improvements have been made to the print-out.

But what does the future hold for Final Days?

There are several minor alterations which will eventually be implemented:

- The regenerate command will be amalgamated with the transfer reinforcements command. They serve basically the same function and there are already a large number of commands to remember without duplication. The only real decision to be made is the phase of the turn in which to make the repairs.
- When asked, most players thought that it would be nice to be able to leave short messages or sign-posts in hexes. It is a relatively easy feature to add, and it is the sort of gloss that Rick likes to see on PBM games.
- One criticism often made is that mines can blow up units belonging to the player who laid them. Keeping track of who laid mines in a hex is awkward as more than one person can do so. The best solution yet suggested is to allow sappers to escort units across mined hexes, no matter whose mines they are.

Further changes may be made to the program that handles the tactics of the computer units. Players have been quick to come forward with suggestions for their own benefit, but the poor old computer is unable to put its case. The challenge is to establish a solid defence for the computer that is beatable if enough of the players cooperate.

# ...FINAL DAYS

To be honest, I am not particularly satisfied with FD in its current form. Originally I intended to have 20+ players battling for supremacy across a hexagonal battlefield, this appealed to me as I found the battles in Return From Sirius a bit mundane (Apologies to RFS gamers, but it was designed by a pacifist). Then the subject of a cooperative game was raised and we decided to have 20 Davids fight 1 Goliath. We could hardly expect a single person to control 300 to 500 units so I set about writing a computer unit control program.

I now intend to go back to the original concept in a variation of the game system to be called Final Days: Epilogue. The battle system will remain basically the same, with the possible introduction of artillery. There will be 18 players, 6 running human units like those in the current game, 6 running robot units and the remaining 6 running mutant units.

The playing area will be the same as now used, except that the idea of the surrounding weirdlands will be scrapped and the hex edges will wrap around (original huh?). There will be weird hexes on the playing area which will act like teleportation portals.

More unit types will be introduced, especially for the mutants, who will have access to clairvoyant units and teleporting units. Humans would probably get an artillery unit and the robots would probably get one or two new types as well.

There will be several winning conditions. Anyone could win by controlling half the population, humans could win by controlling half the ruins, robots by controlling half the factories. As for a winning condition for mutants, I still do not have one that sounds practical, controlling half the radioactive hexes is a bit odd and becoming the most numerous life-form really requires a group victory. Anyone got any bright ideas? The variety of winning conditions should encourage lots of cooperation and back-stabbing between leaders of different races.

Until next issue.

Lindon Flood

## TWO NEW DIPLOMACY GAMES HOT OFF THE PRESSES

The games:

86 F

86 G

Countries  
and Players

AUSTRIA:	Alan Howard 10 McGregor St Berri SA 5343	Gavin Begbie 15 Boambee St Port Macquarie NSW 2444
TURKEY:	Whitefriars Adventure Gamers c/ Whitefriars College 25 Park Rd Donvale Vic 3111	Richard Wood PO Box 8 North Hobart Tas 7000
FRANCE:	Patrick Freeman 10 Walbundry Ave Frankston North Vic 3200	Mark Pollinger 26 Murray Ave Springwood NSW 2777
ENGLAND:	S. Cross PO BOX 122 Zeehan Tas 7469	Greg Long 94 Hanson St Corryong Vic 3707
RUSSIA:	C. Jamieson 1 Cormack St Sherwood Qld 4075	P. Szabo 34 Wandsworth Rd Surrey Hills Vic 3127
ITALY:	Robert Brown 12 A May St East Doncaster Vic 3109	William Webber 29 Canning St North Melbourne Vic 3051
GERMANY:	James Vickers 4 Tower Rd Newtown Tas 7008	Peter Kahlbaum 29 Jamaica Ave Fulham Gardens SA 5024

GAME MASTERS:

86 F

86G

Dougal McCulloch  
4 Ivy St  
Burwood Vic 3125

Paul Yovich  
19 Denmark Way  
Warwick WA 6024

NEW GAME FILLING 86H (the last game for 86) or 87A (first game for 87)

Martin Kenseley, Doug Cowling, Jim Penman, Philip Watkins, and Rick Snell (making an active return to playing after GMing duties been lifted) need 2 more players and a willing GM. Is Cameron Thomas game for a rematch?

## IMPORTANT ADDRESSES,

Please note new GMs/addresses to whom your moves should be sent.

GAME MASTERS:

84A  
Paul Mellor  
149 Hurstville Rd  
Oatley NSW 2223

84 B  
A. Geissman  
24 Caroline St  
Kingsgrove NSW 220

84C  
Duncan Baxter  
53 Myall Ave  
Kennington Gardens  
SA 5068

84E  
Darryl Davis  
RMB 5403  
Manor Hill Close  
Holgate NSW 2250

84F  
William Brown  
F4/35 Caroline St  
East Hawthorn VIC 3124

85G  
Andrew Schacht  
5 Pentland Ave  
Punchbowl NSW 2196

85H  
Terry Bradley  
18 Cook St  
Satur via Scone 2337

85I  
Eric Roche  
110 Cottenham Ave  
Kingsford NSW 2032

85 J @ 86 A  
Mark Dewis  
31 Mary St  
East Launceston 7250

85K  
Wayne Closter  
358 Burwood Hwy  
Burwood Vic 3125

85L  
Roscoe Taylor  
Trinity College  
Parkville VIC 305

85 M  
Steven Bagshaw  
78 Sherington Rd  
Greenwood WA 6024

85N  
Eric Roche  
110 Cottenham Ave  
Kingsford NSW 2032

86 B  
Tony Graham  
90 Green Point Rd  
Oyster Bay NSW 2225

Machiavelli 2  
Ben Aveling  
17 Longbourne Ave  
Notting Hill 3168

AWHC Diplomacy  
Mark Haughey  
8 Goodenia St  
Rivett NSW 2611

86 C  
Andrew England  
91 College Rd  
Somerton Park SA 5044

86 E  
Tim Friedrich  
6 Richardson  
Box Hill SA 3128

86 D  
Bill McKinley  
18 Wonderlost Outlook  
Awnerley QLD 4103

86 F  
Dougal Mcculloch  
4 Ivy St  
Burwood 3125

86 G  
Paul Yovich  
19 Denmark Way  
Warwick WA 6024

## NEXT TURN DEADLINES

All moves to the GMs by: FRIDAY 2 JAN 1987  
GMs results: FRIDAY 9 JAN 1987.

NOTES.

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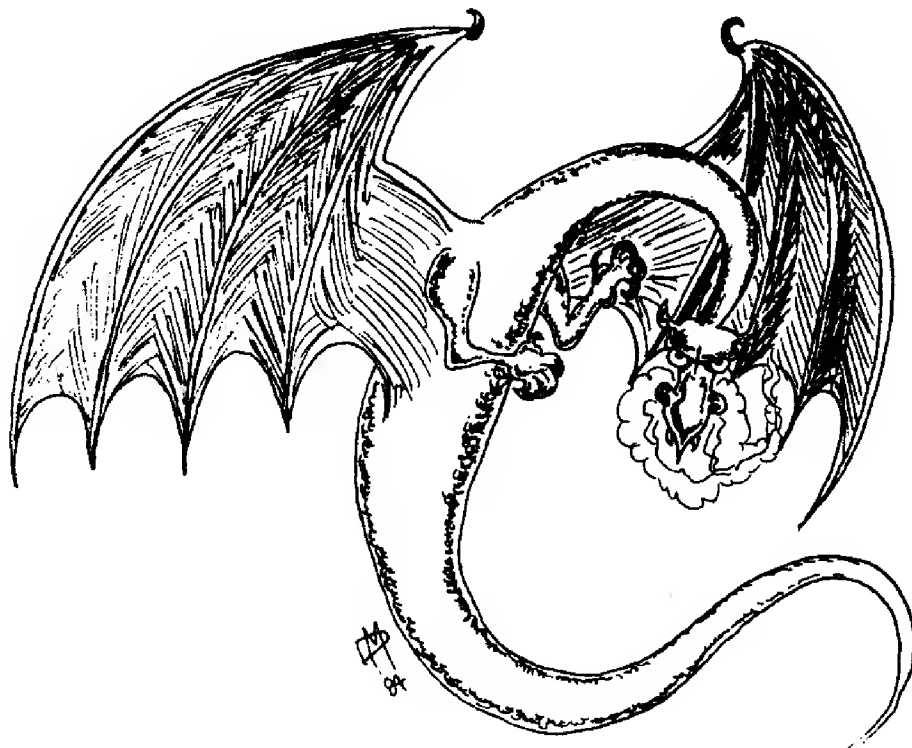
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